











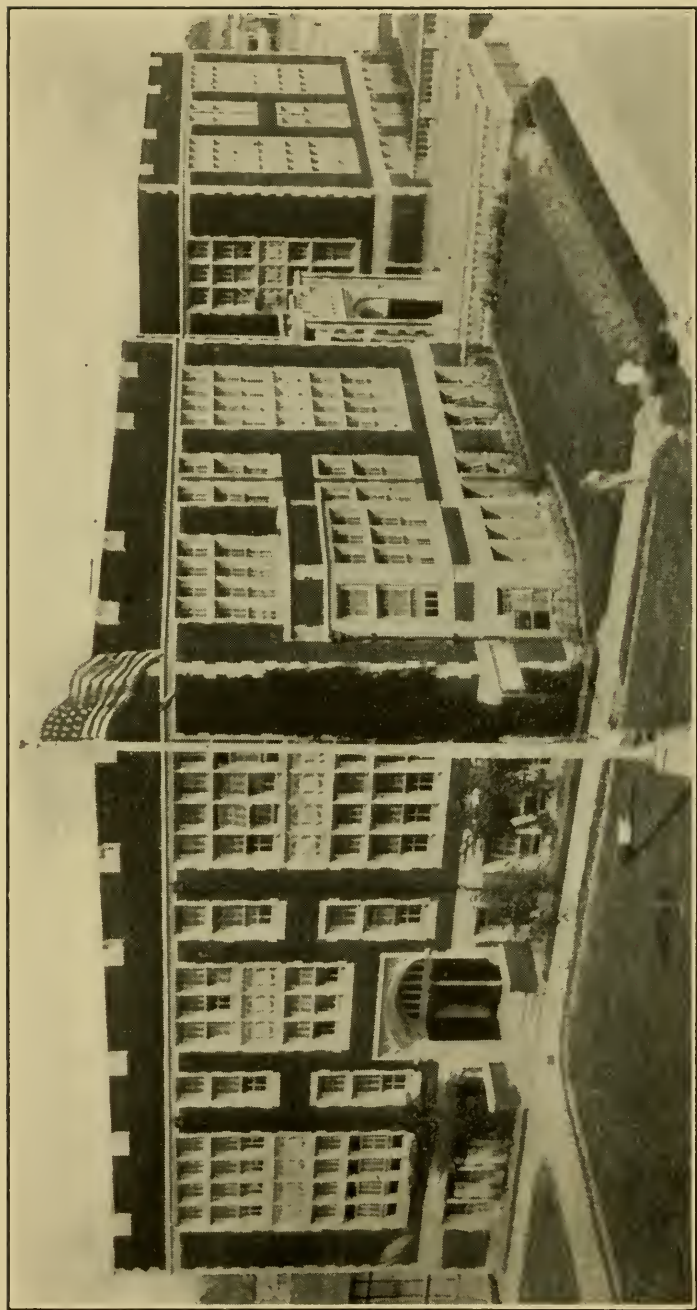




# The Community Capitol







THE FIRST COMMUNITY CAPITOL.

Park View School, Washington, D. C., the first schoolhouse-postal station in the United States with publicly-elected and publicly-paid community secretary.

# THE COMMUNITY CAPITOL

A Program for American Unity

*By*

M. CLYDE KELLY

Member of Congress from Pennsylvania

Author of "MACHINE-MADE LEGISLATION"

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With Illustrations from Photographs

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## Foreword

There are among us Americans all the sorts that Kipling's composite describes—the "shambling" and the "blatant," the "cringing" and the "careless," the "panic-blinded," the "enslaved, illogical, elate," and perhaps there is something of all those qualities in each of us. But there is also that American—that typical embodiment of the American spirit—to whom the lines apply:

"He turns a keen untroubled face  
Home, to the instant need of things."

More than any other that I know, M. Clyde Kelly—farmer boy, school teacher, newspaper editor, municipal reformer, state legislator, and now United States Congressman chosen by the nearly unanimous vote of his district—is that American.

And straight past the accidents of birth and income, of sex and age, of party and creed,—by means of this book M. Clyde Kelly challenges precisely that capacity in each of us which he himself typifies; the capacity for intelligently facing "the instant need of things," and for perfecting and using the instrumentality at

hand by which we—all of us, in our home neighborhoods—may participate in dealing effectively with the problems, political, economic, social, by which we as neighbors, members of America, earth-dwellers, are confronted.

The engine of liberty, the machine of democracy—The Community Capitol—whose construction and use is the theme of this book, is concretely, the combination of the public school equipment established as neighborhood headquarters of authoritative citizen expression, and the postal service fully developed as the agency of national and finally world-wide co-operation.

The two elements of this institutional union are as familiar as if they were really two persons in each American neighborhood; the public school—a precise, forbidding maiden, very respectable, very good, and—very lonesome; the postal service, a bachelor, busy, traveling constantly, not showing sentiment, but beneath the business exterior—yearning for the creativeness of love and the home fireside to start out from and to come back to.

And these two have been written about, and criticized, and lauded, and generally discussed—separately, as though they were two unmarried persons of opposite sex. But never before has the perfect naturalness, the filling out for

each of what the other lacks, the creativeness, of their union been seen and set forth.

This is the great new message of this book.

The construction and use of this perfected instrument of democracy, coördinated of the public school and the postal service, is, however, presented not at all as an institutional romance, but as a practical, common-sense, engineering proposition, with plans, specifications, arguments as substantial and solid as cobble-stones for the testing of educational, political and social technicians. (And, by the way, it may be well to remind those of us community organization experts who may be inclined to ask: "What competence has a nonprofessional community person for writing on 'The Community Capitol'?" that the man who designed the United States capitol, of which the architecture is the best in America, was not a professional architect.)

But just as every living thing is not something else than a machine; but a machine plus something else—that mysterious something else that we call "life"; and as every right marriage union of a maid and a man is more than a law-defined contract, so this coördination of these two institutions, the neighborhood-uniting public school and the world-integrating postal system, means more than the mechanical equip-

ment of the citizenship for political and economic control. It means also that mysterious something else, that has to do with the liberating of the creative impulse, that may be defined as making the world of the neighborhood and finally the neighborhood of the world feel more like home.

E. J. WARD,

*Specialist in Community Organization,  
United States Bureau of Education.*

*Washington, D. C., March 15, 1921.*

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Part I

The Fellowship of the Folks



## I.

### THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE FOLKS.

Democracy is a whole people getting together for happiness. As a nation America understands the theory of democracy, but as individuals, we do not practice it. We can die for democracy across the seas but we have not been able to live democracy at home. The brotherhood that was to save us has been divided by all the bigotries of caste, race, creed, and party. Following such division have come misunderstanding, hatred, greed and ignorance, while great numbers of Americans find life "weary, stale, flat and unprofitable."

The stark individualism, which has been the bone and sinew of our Americanism, served the common good, perhaps, in the day of the pioneer: it means destruction in this day of possession and development. When the land was a virgin wilderness and an unbounded domain stretched before the men at Plymouth Rock and Jamestown, each individual was forced to provide for himself and defend himself. The law of the wilderness was supreme. Men were compelled to match their strength and

cunning against savage beasts and savage men of the forests, and woe to the man who could not cope with his enemies.

That was the time and the man described by Kipling in his "Foreloper."

" The gull shall whistle in his wake, the blind wave  
break in fire,  
He shall fulfill God's utmost will, unknowing his  
desire.  
And he shall see old planets pass and alien stars  
arise,  
And give the gale his reckless sail, in shadow of new  
skies.  
Strong lust of gear shall drive him forth and hunger  
arm his hand,  
To wring his food from deserts nude, his foothold  
in the sand.  
His neighbor's smoke shall vex his eyes, their voices  
break his rest.  
He shall go forth till South and North, lie sullen  
and dispossessed.  
He shall come back o'er his own track and by his  
scarce cool camp,  
There shall he meet the roaring street, the derrick  
and the stamp.  
For he shall blaze a nation's ways with hatchet and  
with brand,  
Till on his last won wilderness, a people's empire  
stands."

That day has long since passed. The wilderness has been conquered. The prairie has seen seed time and harvest. On every mountain top and land's-end, there is a sign, "Private Prop-

erty, No Trespass." There is no longer any farther West. We have come back on ourselves and the problems which follow upon the continuous smoke from the dwellings of neighbors, and the unceasing sound of their voices, must be met with finality, here and now.

The Ishmael-like philosophy of "every man for himself," if carried further in America will inevitably destroy our society. Carried to its logical conclusion, it would compel every American who desires to triumph in this jungle-warfare to make the boast of one of the old kings of Spain, who lay dying. The priest attending him reminded the monarch that he had led a life of bloodshed and admonished him that as he was about to appear before his Creator, he should use his last moments to forgive his enemies and seek their forgiveness. "My enemies," said the dying tyrant, "I have no enemies. I have killed them all."

Manifestly such a gentle consummation is impossible, so the very law of self-defense must force us, if we are to survive, to get together on the basis of "all for each, each for all, and all together for the common good." In so far as we have failed to do so, we have lost contact with happiness, which is the true touchstone of democracy.

When Confucius was asked by his disciples to put into one sentence the philosophy of life and progress, he replied that it is all contained in one word—"Reciprocity." It is a true word for to-day in America. There must be opportunity for individual freedom, for individual responsibility and progress, for without these the essence of Americanism disappears. But we must learn the all-important lesson that, while each American is an individual unit, he is at the same time a member of the American community.

For fifty years we have devoted our best energies to the construction of machinery, by which iron and steel and other materials work together for a common purpose. Our supreme accomplishment in such power development is the turbine engine, which drives the mighty battleships of Uncle Sam's Navy. It has been a development from the one and two and multiple cylinder engines, to the turbine, with 14,000 and more little blades, adjusted in such a way that every vibration of every blade adds to the power of the whole.

Now we must turn to the development of machinery by which folks may work together for the common happiness and welfare. The turbine furnishes the principle and the task is the adjustment of each individual so that the

maximum of efficient power may be generated through the combined efforts of all.

This can only be done by giving Americans the sense of belonging to America, of being vital parts of one great organism. The nation, as a "common aggregate of living identities, must be placed on one universal, common platform." There must be an all-inclusive organization of the people, so that they may get together, as individuals, not as groups, for the common counsel which is essential for the discovery of the common interest.

If people are to get together, there must be a place of meeting, where they may gather as neighbors, members of the community. Only by mingling with each other, on a common level, can people come to know each other and out of such knowledge, agree upon a common purpose.

#### SCHOOL DISTRICT TRUE UNIT OF NEIGHBORHOOD.

The unit of neighborhood in America is the public school district. The entire nation is divided into these natural communities, and in the center of each is a public building, owned by all the people, regardless of all lines of class and creed and partisanship and income. To them everybody comes by right and from them nobody is excluded.



The school house is the one true answer to the demand for a meeting place, where by association on a common level, the sense of equality may be realized, and where in the power and happiness of touching elbows, Americans may banish the thousand and one divisive lines of danger. In the very beginnings of our national life, the public school house was regarded as a pillar of the Republic. The system of public, common schools is the one institution America has given the world. Thomas Jefferson, author of the Declaration of Independence, was the first president of the School Board of the District of Columbia, a position he accepted while he was President of the United States. Among his letters is found his message of acceptance, in which he expresses his sense of honor in assuming a position in the American public school system and promises to attend the meetings of the board. Now, we can return to that source of liberty, undefiled, and use it for modern needs.

“The little old drab school is gone,  
Its spirit must not go.  
The power it gave in other days,  
We need, far more, to know.  
Heavy the tasks that call our hands,  
Divided strengths are small.  
Uniting here for common things,  
Each finds the might of all.”



The public school plant represents the largest single investment of the people's money. America has invested in school buildings the sum of \$1,983,508,818, and expends every year for their operation \$736,678,089. Sadly enough that tremendous plant is being operated only seven hours a day for 181 days in the year.

To make this great, nation-wide system of public buildings available for the people's community headquarters, all that is necessary is to assert the actual ownership, open the doors and throw back the shutters so that all those in the community who choose may come in and make such use of their own buildings as they desire.

There are 276,827 school districts in America. However, 195,400 of these are really parts of the real unit, the township or other subdivision, which has its school board. In many places there are seven to fifteen little one-room school houses in a single township and the average attendance is from eight to twelve pupils. There should be but one adequate building in these districts and the remarkable growth of the idea of consolidated schools proves that the people are recognizing that fact. Instead of having a small school within walking distance of a few farms, the people of such sections are uniting with the people of the entire neighborhood and are erecting large, modern buildings, where

competent instructors are employed. It means that from 150 to 500 pupils are given superior advantages and the population of the school district ranges from 750 to 2,500.

The United States Bureau of Education states that there are 50,000 communities in America, including consolidated school districts in rural sections and the present school districts in the cities.

Forty-three states now have laws authorizing the expenditures of public funds for the transportation of children to school buildings providing that the children live outside a reasonable walking distance. Experience in every state has proved that the consolidation of rural schools not only makes possible better educational facilities, but actually reduces expenses. The consolidated school is the rural school of to-morrow. The progress of this movement to place the school building in the center of the neighborhood, simplifies the organization of all America into assemblies, for 50,000 community associations will make a chain of brotherhood, reaching from coast to coast, and including every American in its span.

Of all the projects which are being urged today for the solution of our problems and the promotion of American happiness, there is none which promises such certain success as this

common sense plan of diffusing the light of counsel and conference throughout the entire community by means of regular neighborhood assemblies. The establishment of a regularly organized community center in the public school will increase public virtue and elevate public morals and add more than any other one thing to the sum of individual and social well being. Only through neighborly coöperation and mutual help can the individual be fitted to-day to fulfill the duties each owes to himself, to his community and to his country.

#### SCHOOL HOUSE A COMMUNITY BUILDING.

The school house is a community building because of the community of its ownership. Every resident of the community, either directly or indirectly, pays taxes for its erection and its maintenance. Such common ownership is essential for any real community purpose. Many cities and towns have recently erected separate community buildings through private contributions or have inaugurated drives to secure funds for such buildings. These are not community buildings; they are simply club houses for groups of the people, where generally the largest contributors have the greatest influence, while those who gave nothing have nothing to say.

The citizen who is the largest taxpayer in the community has one vote in the control of the public school; so has the citizen who pays his taxes to his landlord. Each citizen has an equal share, simply by virtue of his residence in the community. The school building is, therefore, the one possible agency for unified organization of the people of the United States. It stands ready, waiting to be used for this supreme service, in every neighborhood throughout the nation.

When the Pilgrims hit upon the plan of taxing all the property of the community for the support of free schools, it was the first time in the history of the world that this principle was suggested. They builded wiser than they knew, for they have made these buildings the property of the people and it is perfectly legitimate that people use their own buildings for their own meetings for social, recreational and other purposes when the school children are not occupying them.

Such use will fulfill the vision of the founders of the public school system in America. Many and grievous have been the charges of inefficiency levelled at the public schools. Although we are spending two million dollars every day on their upkeep, careful observers gravely point out that they have failed. Dr. Charles W.

Eliot, of Harvard College, for instance, says that "compared with what was hoped from the establishment of the common school, this most important of our institutions has been a failure."

Dr. Eliot declares that the public school system has failed to remedy misgovernment, dissipation and idling, and cleavage and class feeling in our citizenship. Another writer states that he questioned thousands of young Americans on their way to and from school to learn their ideals of Americanism. The all prevailing idea among these school pupils was that an American is one who makes money and makes it fast. This observer is convinced that the American birthright to these young minds was simply a get-rich-quick opportunity.

Surely no one shall fail to understand that the public school building, simply as an education-center for the child, cannot meet all these needs and remedy all evils. The public school for the child must be a place of monarchy, a place of training in obedience. Instruction is handed down from above. But good citizenship is vastly more than obedience; it is the knowledge of responsibility, the active participation in the government. The art of right living can never be mastered save in coöperation with equals. No school, or college, or university has this



most important of all the arts of life in its curriculum. It can be won only in the ceaseless contacts of community life, organized for effective expression; in the study of men and women in their best moods in association with their neighbors.

Misgovernment, dissipation and idling, class spirit and the putting of the rule of gold above the Golden Rule, can be banished only when the public school building is made a community civic-center for adults as well as an education-center for children. Then men will have practice in the great business of getting along with fellowmen. Then men will be able to analyze motives and weigh rewards and to be set free from shams and false standards, through knowledge of the Truth.

Instead of being a mere incident to community life, this distinctive American institution must be made the center of it. Instead of being only a printed pattern on the social fabric, it must be ingrained in it.

“The starting point of every good,  
Of larger life, is Neighborhood.”

To multiply and strengthen such sources of education as community assemblies is the wisest patriotism, for while they make citizens to know their rights, at the same time they enforce their obligations to society. Under the organization

of the adults may be formed a Young People's League, including in its membership the youth from sixteen to twenty years of age. In the actual practice of community citizenship they will gain knowledge of the fact that rights and duties in America go hand in hand, better than through any number of educational courses in school or college. In this way democracy may become a habit of life in the young people who are just forming their life habits and it will be fulfillment of the ideals back of the public school system.

Of course the use of the school buildings as community centers is based upon the fact that the people are sovereign over these buildings and have an unqualified right to use them as they desire. It is unfortunately true that many times, because of lack of effective organization boards of education have usurped the people's collective authority. They have often regarded themselves as owners, instead of agents and have felt competent to lay down laws for the very people who elected them to be trustees and nothing more.

#### THE SCHOOL BELONGS TO THE CITIZENS.

As trustees, the boards of education have been justified in refusing to admit any right on the part of any special group to use the school

building and they have rightly made such use a matter of permission, to be decided by themselves. The school house does not belong to groups, it belongs to the citizenship, made up of the individuals in the community. But the refusal of any board of education to permit the whole community to use its own property as it desires, is an instance of servants giving orders to their masters; it is an intolerable usurpation of authority.

The simple statement of the situation should be conclusive as to the right of the whole community to get together in their own school building for anything which it occurs to them to do. But decades of abdication of rightful power on the part of the people, simply because they were not organized to exert that power, makes necessary a reaffirmation of that fundamental right.

There have been many instances like that which occurred in the city of Washington, in 1918. There the people of the school district community organized for the use of their own school building. In the course of their organized activities, they decided to hold a certain meeting on a Sunday afternoon. This decision was vetoed by the Board of Education, which gravely declared that it would not permit the use of the school building on Sunday.

The issue was joined, not at all primarily, on



the merits of the question as to propriety of meeting on Sunday, but on the wider issue as to whether or not the community had the right to use the school building how and when it desired. The one question was that of final authority—Which held the power of decision, the organized community or the Board of Education? In Washington City, this issue was decided by the Act of Congress, asserting the right of the people to decide as to the use of their public school buildings.

The same conflict of authority has been witnessed in other states and it has been decided by similar legislation in several states of the Union. Laws of many other states affirm the right of the people to use school buildings, aside from school hours, "for the purpose of meeting and discussing any and all subjects, which in their judgment may appertain to the educational, political, economic, artistic, and moral interests of the citizens."

In numerous communities in other states, the people have not waited for any legislative enactment, but have organized to use their school buildings as community centers. The average board of education, when composed of elected officials, wishes no test of supremacy with its creator, the people. The simple process of defeating directors who so abuse their office is

sufficient and where necessary has proved adequate remedy. The efficiency of any public official who would undertake to refuse to permit the principal, whose agent he is, full use of his own property, would be on a par with the cook, who applied for a place and who, when asked for reference, presented the following: "To whom it may concern: This is to certify that Nora Foley has worked for us for one week and we are satisfied."

Autocratic control of the school buildings of America must be changed to democratic control and there might well be an affirmation on the statute books of every state that the organized citizenship of the community have an inherent right to use their own school buildings in which to talk about the things that ought to be talked about and to do the things which ought to be done.

#### DOUGHBOYS IN A GERMAN HIGH SCHOOL.

It can be done whenever America wills it. In Coblenz, Germany, shortly after the armistice, I saw the Kaiser Wilhelm High School transformed into a place for the education and recreation of American doughboys and on several occasions I watched a German band playing with great intensity, for their edification, the Star-Spangled Banner. After accomplishing

such transformation, it should be child's play to the American people to make their own school buildings subject to their own control, as centers of community development.

It is important to recognize the fact that no right to use the public school buildings inheres in any clique or group or part of the people. Therefore the first essential in any community organization making this building its headquarters is an all-inclusive organization. In every organization using the term community, it must be a fundamental principle that every citizen is a member by virtue of his residence in the community. Then it matters little how many attend any certain meeting if the doors are open to all who choose to attend.

Under the community organization, any groups or clans may use the building by community permission, but no partisan or private group of any kind ought to be allowed to use the public school building except by the invitation of neighbors whose community home it is. That is the home development, so needed in America; the group control is the method, in Rooseveltian phrase, of the "polyglot boarding house."

This organization must be as wide as American citizenship. To gain admission to its fraternity must require no ritual and no dues. By

virtue of his citizenship and his residence in the community, the individual is a member and no power may require other qualification. This is the fellowship of folks in America, and under no pretext may any of the folks be excluded.

I contend that the inalienable rights of man, specified and implied in the Declaration of Independence, are in reality, but one,—the right of a man to his place in the American brotherhood. To-day, beneath all our strenuous rushing and pushing, our hustle and bustle, there is a profound lonesomeness. Why is it? Because of the vision of brotherhood, pointed out in that same Declaration, but which has been unfulfilled. It will continue to haunt us until performance overtakes promise.

The right to live is more than the privilege of breathing. It is the right to live the life of a human being and that is fulfilled only in mutual coöperation and assistance.

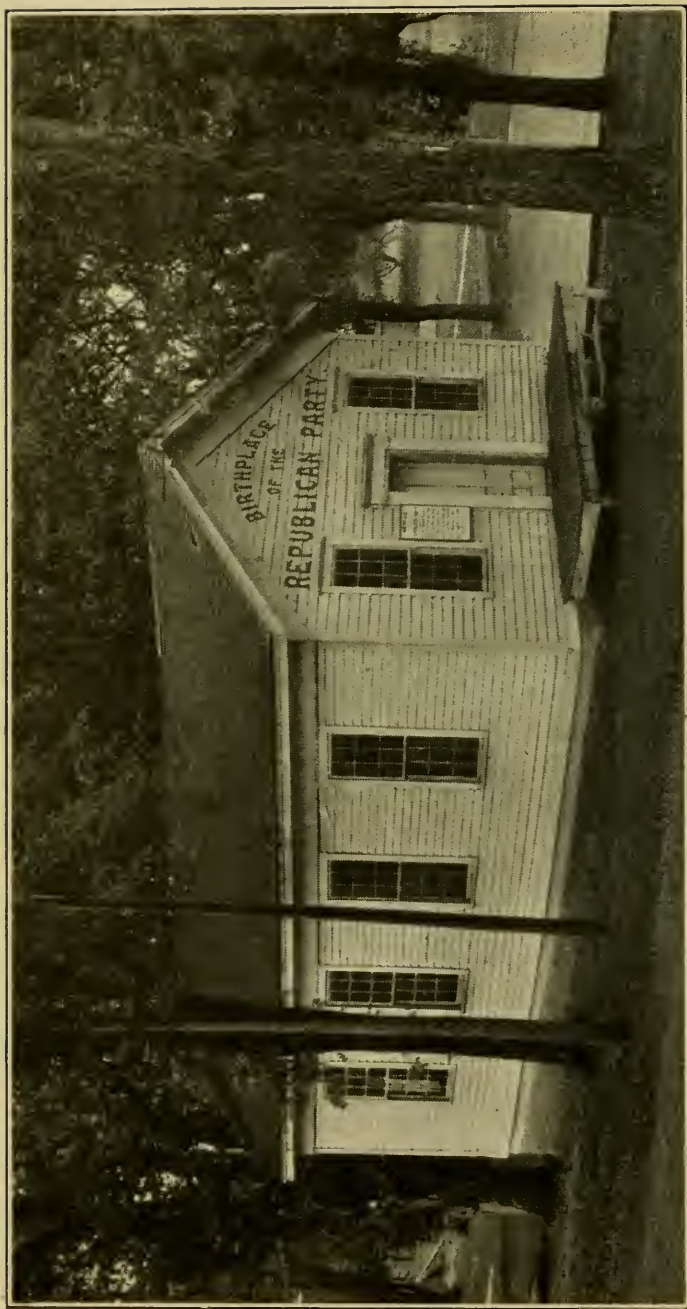
The right to liberty is more than keeping out of chains. It is the right to the service of fellow men, which is the highest freedom.

The right to pursue happiness is more than the mere privilege of selfish comfort. It is right to be a member of the nation, to have a part in the nation's work and in promoting the common good.

The democracy of the Declaration of Inde-







THE BIRTHPLACE OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY.

Schoolhouse at Ripon, Wisconsin, where on March 20, 1854, the initial organization of the Republican party was effected.

pendence is the keystone in the arch of Americanism. If that soul-stirring, red-blooded declaration of American unity, pledged with life and fortune and sacred honor, means anything at all, it means that every American has a right, not simply to live in America, but to live in the fellowship of his brother Americans.

There is a denial of that right where there is no opportunity for Americans to get together with their neighbors in the interrelationship which is as essential to communal health, as is the coördination of cells and parts of the body to bodily health and well being. In both cases, practice is essential to efficient use. The child is born without skill in the use of its hands, but continual practice trains them to the mastery of a hundred arts. So in the practice of coöperation comes efficiency, while the command of Nature, "use or lose" is of full effect in social relations as well as in the physical world.

There is the same denial of this fundamental right of all Americans when some part of the community organizes and excludes other citizens, no matter what qualifications may be set up. It is depriving some citizens of their right to access to the channels of sympathy and communication and self expression. There is a cruel wrong done the excluded persons and

there is no community life in the part which excludes others.

It is astonishing to see the number of organizations which are springing up in America, styling themselves "community" organizations, when they have no right whatever to use the term. They lay down hard and fast rules for membership, prescribe dues and deliberately exclude certain parts of the community. They are select membership clubs and nothing more, and, however worthy in themselves, should not be permitted to pretend falsely to be community associations.

There are Boards of Trade, Chambers of Commerce and other special-interest groups, which now term themselves "community" organizations simply because a newly changed clause in the constitution says all American citizens are eligible to membership. Then, by exacting large dues and by meeting in private quarters, where group control is assured, they nullify the open-door policy and remain simply and solely a group association.

Those at the head of these masquerading clubs generally denounce the ignorance and indifference of the average citizen, who refuses to rush headlong into their enticing web. But, in reality, the general refusal of the people to join



these so-called "community" ventures is a tribute to their intelligence.

#### CITIZENSHIP THE SUPREME CLUB MEMBERSHIP.

The people see behind the mask. They know the spirit and the purpose which actuates these enthusiasts for getting-together to advance the interests of the few, first, last, and all the time. They know that the constitution of any real community organization must carry substantially this clause: "All citizens of the United States, 21 years of age or over, residing in this community, ARE members of this association." The people know that citizenship is the supreme club membership and there has been no lack of enthusiastic support wherever there has been an honest effort to establish, in the people's house and under the people's control, a community center, where every citizen with the will to try democracy, enters his place by right and not by suffrance.

There is not a community in the United States where this same success cannot be attained. I have seen organization affected where the neighborhood was split with feuds and misunderstandings. The first meeting would find little knots of people gathered together in the school room, glowering at each other, suspicious that some advantage would be seized. But as the

meetings continued, with equal opportunity to each individual, and all decisions by majority vote, after full discussion, I have seen the wonder of mutual understanding conquering mutual suspicion and dislike. In these community centers there have been scores of activities worked out successfully, where before organization, they would have been impossible.

The fact is that American communities are very similar, after all. A man moved to another community because he was convinced that his neighbors were the meanest people on earth. On his way to his new home he talked to an old philosopher and told him his reason for changing his residence. Said the old man, "They are just as bad, or worse, where you are going." And they were. Soon after another man passed the old philosopher and told him that he was moving to this community in order to have better school facilities for his children and that it grieved him to leave his old home because he had the kindest neighbors in the world. Said the old man, "You'll find them just as kind where you are going." And he did. It was the same community; it was the spirit which made the difference.

The public school building and an all-inclusive membership: these are two fundamental prin-

ciples if the people of America are to get together for the common happiness and welfare.

But these are not all. The people, gathered in the school house must be efficiently organized, else there is simply a helpless crowd.

Of course, every officer will be elected directly by the people, or the whole idea of democratic organization fails. Elections by boards of directors or self-appointed leaders, mean control elsewhere than in the body of the people. There should be a primary election where every member may vote for his first choice. Then by eliminating, for the final election, all save those who receive the highest number of votes, the choice of the majority is assured.

The one officer, above all others in importance, is the community secretary. This office is one which is destined to become the most honorable in every community. The community secretary will be the responsible servant of the people, the embodiment of the will of the community. He will be the greatest servant of the community and thus will have the highest office.

In early efforts to organize themselves, communities elected the secretary, with the other officers, as a volunteer worker, who would assist in the community activities, but with no special responsibilities in looking after details of arrangements under the direction of the com-

munity. Every member was equally responsible in looking after the work necessary to successful organization.

### EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS—AND NOBODY'S.

The result proved again the truth of the old adage, "What is everybody's business is nobody's business." Meeting time found no arrangements for the program decided upon; plans failed of execution because this volunteer service went unperformed. It was the same trouble as in all civic and social welfare needs, through the lack of organization itself, when it is everybody's business to attend to these duties and ends by being nobody's. The arch offender in both cases is Nobody.

I am to blame, I am Nobody.

The town, you say, is dead and who's to blame?

No welcome is there here, and who's to blame?

Your lives, you say, are bleak, and who's to blame?

Your leaders lack support, and who's to blame?

The things that should be done are left undone,

It's everybody's business, so it's mine,

I am Nobody.

Out of this experience came recognition of the need of a community secretary to act as the responsible agent of the people in their use of their community house, such definite service to be paid for by the whole community.

The importance of this office is shown by the section dealing with the community secretary in the constitution adopted by the Mount Joy township community, in Adams county, Pennsylvania.

“It is the duty of the community secretary to serve as the agent of the citizens of the United States residing in this township and constituting the membership of this association, in officially communicating with and receiving official communications from national, state, and county representatives and administrators, and in preparing for market and dispatching or ordering and receiving commodities for residents of this township as this association may direct: to serve as the clerk in connection with and at such community meetings as this association may direct to be called; inviting and arranging for the coming of such public officials, candidates for public office, or other speakers as the association may desire to hear: seeing that the school building is open and in readiness for each community meeting or other gathering arranged by or under the auspices of this association: being responsible to the board of school directors for assuring the observance of the board's regulations established to forward the rightful and prevent the improper use of public school property. Keeping a correct roll of



members and a complete record of attendance, topics considered, principal speakers and action taken at each community meeting: to serve as custodian of all books, pamphlets, charts, pictures and other informational and exhibit material belonging to, or loaned to, or to be acquired by this association: cataloguing the same so as to facilitate its effective and proper use, and making available for signing such nominating or other petitions, subscription rolls, lists of positions vacant, applications for employment or other lists, forms or files as the association may direct or the public need require to be compiled or kept: to serve as the executive of this association in arranging for such occasional or special programs, lectures, exhibits, entertainments, celebrations, festivals, and commemorations as this association may direct: in organizing and directing the social and recreational activity of the youth and children of the township as this association may direct: and in managing whatever tax maintained coöperative enterprises as may be established or authorized to be conducted in, or in connection with the public school building: to serve as supervisor of such dramatic, literary, or other special group organizations, societies, clubs or classes as may be formed under the auspices of this association or authorized to

meet in this school building: and at all times and in every way to seek to assure a proper co-ordination and harmony between the instructional use of the public school property for the children and its use by the older members of the community.”

This outline of legitimate community activities proves both the vital importance of the community secretary and the tremendous possibilities of proper organization of communities. There is no authority over the people given to the community secretary, but he acts directly under their instructions as did the old town clerk in the New England town meetings.

These old town meetings are impossible. Skyscrapers have blotted out the village greens and hurrying traffic beats over the commons. But, in city and town alike, we may win back the old spirit of neighborhood and common life and common action by efficient organization of the communities, with democratically elected, publicly paid officials to serve under the people's direction.

It was the position of community secretary, in essence, which was held by Daniel Webster, in Fryburg, Maine. He was employed as principal of the academy there and was given a salary of \$350 per year. He had planned to use the money received for the tuition of himself

and his brother, Ezekiel, at college. It was the same brother who was the immortal helper of Daniel. Their father found it necessary to reproach both boys for their listless performance of certain farm duties. He questioned Daniel, "What have you been doing all day?" "Nothing, sir," was the truthful response. "And you, Zeke, what have you been doing?" asked the irate parent. "I have been helping Daniel," answered Zeke.

On this occasion, however, Daniel desired to help Zeke. But the salary was not sufficient for him to carry out his desire, if any of it were spent for living expenses. In this quandary, Daniel insisted that he be given an opportunity to earn enough additional money to provide for food, room rent and other expenses. He was accordingly made assistant town clerk, with duties through which he could earn \$2 a week. As school principal he was over the children, and in his other position he was under the adults of the community, a coupling up process, which was of vital advantage to all.

The incident shows that even in that early period, the school teacher was often compelled to supplement his salary by outside employment. Webster did it through a position in the community organization. To-day, the school teachers are still the neglected safeguards of



our democracy, and \$2 a week would be of practically no assistance in combatting the high cost of living. But the answer to the problem is the same to-day as in Daniel Webster's time. Where the school teacher or a principal is chosen as community secretary by the people, he becomes the same vital link between children and adults in the use of the school building. It opens the way for an adequate income for school teachers in many communities, for the duties of community secretary are not to be considered as extra efforts, but as a distinct service to be properly compensated by the community.

Mount Joy township community elected A. Nevin Sponsellor, teacher in one of the township schools, as community secretary. He received \$250 a year as public school teacher and as community secretary and postal agent he was paid \$300 a year additional. His income was more than doubled by the combination of his duties as instructor of the children with his duties as public servant of the community.

#### COMMUNITY SECRETARY IS PIVOTAL PERSON.

The community secretary is the pivotal person in community organization. The name itself means "one who is intrusted with secrets." The person who possesses the community's secrets is always and necessarily a man of power.

If he knows the evil secrets of the people, the things which men fear to have known publicly, he is a power for evil. The political boss makes it his sinister business to know every failing and wrongful act of those with whom he deals and thus he makes cowards and cravens out of men. Governor Sulzer, of New York, was destroyed by Tammany because of this power, after having elevated him to high office. The man with dark spots in his life must of necessity serve the possessor of his evil secrets or meet destruction.

Instead of these holders of evil secrets, we need secretaries of goodness, possessors of good secrets. Men have secret strengths, and finenesses and noble qualities. The community secretary is a man hired to search out these hidden nobilities even as the "boss" digs for evil facts.

In every community, yes, in every individual, there are reservoirs of undeveloped capacity needing only the channels of opportunity to exert their influence for good. The saddest tragedy in the world is the life confined to shallows, when it is meant for the deeps of human existence, when there are "empires in the brain." After all, it is the opportunity that makes the man show his real qualities.

In the terrible struggle in Argonne wood, the cook of a certain unit had prepared food and sent it to the soldiers in the front lines, but it was destroyed by shell fire. Knowing the needs of his "boys" he prepared a treat by combining all the remaining materials into hot hash in readiness for their return. As the time of their coming approached, he sent a K. P. to tell the boys of the feast which awaited them. Their approach was soon signalled but the cook could not wait. He ran to bring the good news in person. Fifty yards he ran and then a high explosive shell burst at his feet, tearing off both legs. His assistant ran to him. "Don't mind me," he whispered as he died, "run back and see that the boys' hash don't burn!"

It is the community secretary's task to discover and help to harness these unknown heroic qualities. It is part of the community organization itself to give effective opportunity for their expression, in the advancement of the happiness and welfare of the individual community and nation.

This office is a public position and the compensation must come from public funds. "Whoever pays the fiddler, calls the tune." If any person or group of persons pays the salary of such official, in the end they dictate action. America has had too much of such management

from above: what is needed now is enlightened control by the people.

It is by taxation, the use of community power to raise funds from all alike, that the salaries of these public servants must be paid. Private financing violates the community idea, for no private interests must be allowed to prejudice popular sovereignty. Almost inevitably, private and personal interest in such cases, outweigh the community good. Too many of us are like the Irishman, whose wife was about to die, and who had summoned all her relatives about her bedside. She called her husband to her and said, "When I am dead, don't forget to collect the \$2 that Murphy owes us for eggs." "I'll attend to it, Bridget," he replied. After a little pause she called to him again and said, "And don't forget to collect that \$4 that O'Neil owes us for milk and butter." "I'll attend to that, too," said the husband and addressing himself to the assembled friends, he said with emphasis, "Hear the woman, will you, sensible to the very last." The wife grew weaker and finally called him to her a third time and said, "And when I am dead, don't forget to pay that \$30 we owe the corner grocer." "Hear the woman raving, will you, hear her raving," cried the husband.

When any private power outweighs com-

munity control, anything which advances private interest will generally be regarded as "sensible" action while interference with private advantage will be "raving."

To-day, there are various incorporated societies, generally financed in New York, which maintain corps of highly paid organizers and executive secretaries to build local units and federate them into national organisms under the name of community service, of one variety or another. Appeals are made for popular contributions, on the profession of such activities as separate club houses, forums, recreation grounds, etc. The funds raised are expended under autocratic control, and permanent secretaries are named and retained by the few, while the people have no voice either in their selection or retention. These are in no sense community organizations and have no right whatever to the name.

In the city of Washington early in 1920, one of these societies began a drive for \$83,500. The merits of this organization as compared with the democratically organized community centers in the public school buildings, were brought before a joint committee of the Washington Board of Trade and Chamber of Commerce.

Lengthy and detailed hearings were held and

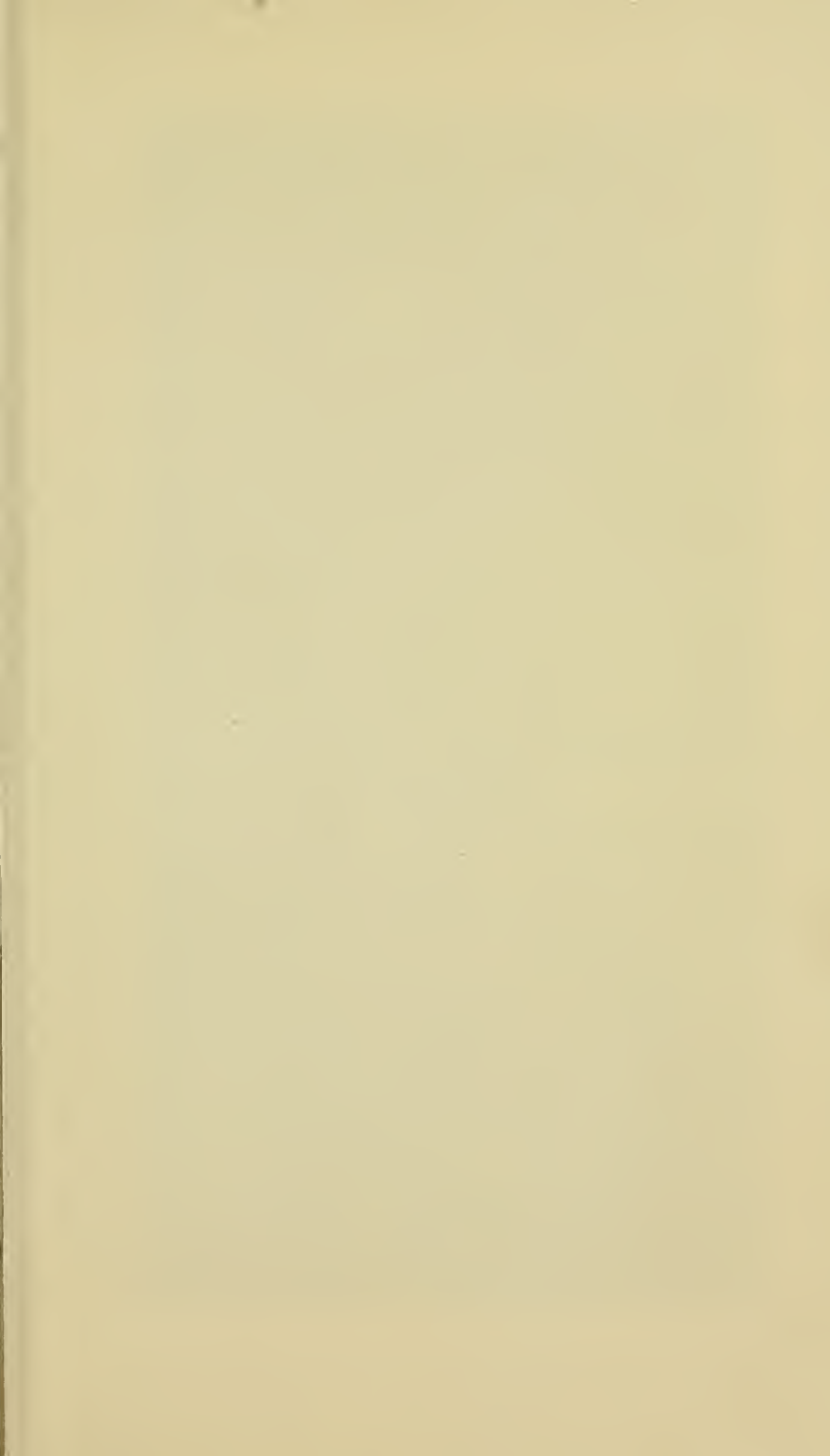


exhaustive investigation made of both types of organization. In the end, these two business bodies flatly refused to recommend financial support for the privately owned and managed service, but paid a high tribute to the community centers in the public schools.

Their report pointed out that \$55,000 of the quota desired by the private organization was to be used for salaries for previously chosen employes. The report concludes:—

“The Board of Trade and Chamber of Commerce do not hesitate to commend the community centers in the school buildings to favorable consideration and general support of all the people and urge them to be active in promoting the work of the centers located in their respective neighborhoods. We urge Congress to increase the annual appropriation for the use of this splendid community work.”

Communities form the public and their work is public work. It is a disgrace to America when any private agency whatever undertakes the leadership in providing means by which communities may come together to promote effectively the public good. Unless all of us pay the price in dollars gathered through the tax office, we must pay a far greater price, even in dollars and cents, through loss of unified action in preventing exploitation by the organized





THE BEGINNING OF THE COMMUNITY CAPITOL.

Citizens' assembly in schoolhouse at Rochester, N. Y., November 1, 1907, whose motto was, "We Can Disagree Agreeably."



few who thrive on special privileges. Any private financing of the community interest is a contradiction in terms, while the attempt to do so shames the community.

“TO RESTORE THE SCHOOL TO ITS TRUE PLACE.”

As Edward J. Ward, community specialist in the United States Bureau of Education, and the leading authority on community organization in the country, has well said:

“The community center is not to be a charitable medium for the service of the poor. It is not to be a new kind of evening school. It is not to take the place of any church or other institution of moral uplift. It is not to serve simply as an ‘improvement association’ in which the people of a restricted community seek only the welfare of their local district. It is not to be a ‘civic reform’ association pledged to some change in city or state or national administration. It is just to be the restoration in its true place in social life of that most American of all institutions, the public school, in order that through the extended use of the common school equipment, may be developed, in the midst of our complex life, the community interest, the neighborly spirit of real democracy.”

Such a purpose is public in the highest degree. It is the realization of the dreams of the found-

ers of this nation as the greatest adventure in democracy. Its scope may be seen in the proposed program of the Community Organization Board, a District of Columbia association chartered for the developing of the community center movement. The opening paragraphs are:

“The purpose of this board is to promote the development of local communities into little democracies, with public school houses as their capitols.

“We conceive that from such fundamental, all-inclusive community organization the benefits of democracy will flow, such as assuring self-development of the individual through mutual counsel and assistance; affording practice in citizenship; providing the means for direct dealing between organized producers and consumers; supplying the method for coördinating all government activities in direct contact with the public; giving aliens and naturalized citizens, as well as native-born the sense of belonging to America; making more effective an enlightened public opinion; advancing a social order in harmony with collective conscience of the nation, thus, making the phrase, ‘We, the people’ a spiritual and visible fact.”

The fifty thousand communities of America, thus organized, spell democracy. It means taking the points of separation out and making

U. S. spell "us." It is a vision of such possibilities which caused Charles E. Hughes, when Governor of New York, to say at a community center meeting in Rochester, "I am more interested in what you are doing and what it stands for than anything else in the world. You are buttressing the foundations of democracy."

Once the school house is opened and lighted and the people are welcome to use it for anything that occurs to them, experience shows that very many things occur to them to do.

The marvel of the motion picture may be used as a social magnet and dynamo of common entertainment and instruction. The community chorus, orchestra and band may bring their never-failing delight to the people. Dramatic ability has the opportunity of expression in these community meeting places. There are holiday celebrations possible, where the spirit of Christmas and New Year's may be spread broadcast and the message of Fourth of July, Washington's and Lincoln's birthdays, Memorial Day, Thanksgiving and Labor Day may give refreshment and inspiration for every member of the community fellowship of folks.

Community baseball teams and other athletic organizations will stir the enthusiasm of American neighborhoods. Pageants where the folk songs and folk dances of America's adopted

sons and daughters, have a part, will help give these former strangers a real sense of partnership in the great task of making America.

### EVERY CITIZEN MADE RICHER.

Libraries of reference books and materials in the community center will make every citizen richer. This information will include official publications from the capitols of the city and state and nation for the use of citizens in the capitol of the community. There will be coördination of governmental activities, the lack of which has cost the people uncounted millions of dollars. In this community house, the agricultural and industrial experts will find the people gathered to hear their messages of instruction. Here the Public Health Service will find the community service, ready and eager for coöperation.

In the community secretary is found the logical person to act as census-taker, not simply at ten-year periods, but to keep a sensible census, with all vital statistics kept up to date, ready for the many uses, for which they are needed. No other person can serve so well as employment agent, for he is in direct touch with the people and with the conditions in the community.

In a multitude of ways, this real community

organization means efficiency and economy. Every dollar of tax money spent in the establishment and maintenance of community centers will return tenfold in the one item of saving of needless governmental activities and present duplications.

Over and above all these benefits, every one of which has been successfully carried out in the public school community centers, stands the major boon—the attainment of democracy—a people getting together for happiness—and by common counsel and mutual agreement solving their problems of every kind. The tremendous responsibility of being citizens in a democracy upon which the future of the world's civilization depends, becomes the joy of fellowship in the great cause of the world, the common good, when individuals may join hands with their neighbors for united efforts. Coöperation in business has been practiced for years, but the greatest business in the world to-day, is the business of being a true American citizen and it can only be accomplished in coöperation with fellow Americans.

Wherever organized in all-inclusive association of neighbors, with responsible public servants in charge of arrangements, under the direction of the community, the meetings in the school buildings have witnessed a sustained en-



thusiasm above that secured by any group activity. There is something lacking in every group assembly, no matter how close the ties that bind members together. In *The American Legion Weekly*, a leading article dealt with statements of an officer of a certain post who complained that only seven members out of 200 attend the meetings. This is an organization of "pals" who faced death together, the strongest possible tie, save that between members of the community, who are facing life together.

The clash of honest expressions of opinion in conference upon matters of importance to all is the most interesting, as it is the most educational thing in the world. It is told that in pioneer times in Kentucky a peddler passed through a frontier town on muster day. Two contentious citizens were engaged in violent debate. The wayfarer moved on after listening several hours, but the debate was still actively in progress. A year later he returned for muster day and found that the two oldsters had resumed the argument apparently at the same point it had been dropped twelve months before. The listener hearkened for a time and then dismounted from his wagon and hailed one of the audience, "I wonder how I can take up a section of land in this district," he said. "I'm thinkin' about livin' here from now on."

“You must like the looks of the country,” said the resident.

“No, not particular,” he responded, “but I aim to stay here and find out how that argument is goin’ to turn out if it takes me the rest of my life.”

Now, while debate without decision is folly, decision without debate is dangerous. Neither one need be chosen when the community gets together for orderly discussion and mutual decision. No other service is greater than for a man, through practice in fellowship, to be able to analyze the motives of men, to know how to rebuke their worst impulses and at the same time to inspire their best qualities: to be able to puncture sophistry and to encourage truth; to be able to allay strife and promote good will. These are the accomplishments and this leadership which America needs now as never before. There are no better places for the development of leadership than in community assemblies, where opportunity meets the masterful man. Here great hearts may be schooled to lift mankind and set wider the bounds of freedom. Here responsibility and friendship, those two great teachers, imbue lessons of righteousness, caution and courage and turn feeblings into giants.

Of course, real leadership and real community development are possible only where

thought and speech are free. In view of what I have said, it should not be necessary to suggest that in the community center, there will be no censorship on what is spoken, save that which is self-imposed by the community itself.

### FREE SPEECH AND GOOD SENSE.

There is no restraint on the utterances of lawmakers in their capitols, instead there is a constitutional provision that members of Congress shall not be called to account elsewhere for their expressions on the floor of Congress. If such free speech is wise for lawmakers, how much more essential for the makers of lawmakers, when they meet in their own community capitols for deliberation and decision.

There will be radical utterances, unwise words, suggestions full of folly. These may safely be left to the collective good sense of the community. A mere notion may always be exploded by asking its author to submit plans and specifications. That is exactly what the neighborhood assembly demands in its all-sided discussion and there are few harebrains who enjoy continually throwing down the gauntlet to community good judgment only to be forced immediately to throw up the sponge.

In any case, there is far greater danger in repression than in expression. Out in the sun-



shine the most foolish or desperate remedies are seen at their real value; driven to the cellar they may become agencies of destruction. The choice is between brains and bombs, debate and dynamite.

Scientists declare that the germs of yellow fever and tuberculosis cannot live in the sunshine. Neither can the germs of corruption and fraud and treason. The command of Almighty God, "Let there be light," is the Divine assurance that the light itself helps to banish confusion and chaos and crime.

In Knight's History of England there is a recital of the struggle necessary before street lamps could be erected in London. When the attempt was made in the Sixteenth Century, every imaginable catastrophe was prophesied. Then in 1807, when the effort was made to substitute gas lights for oil lamps, the battle had to be fought over again. Men said it would be the destruction of the whale oil industry as well as many other business enterprises dependent upon the oil lighting system. But the advocates for more and better light won and the historian, in describing the victory uses the significant statement: "These adventurers in light did more for the prevention of crime than the government had done in centuries."

Democracy and ignorance are incompatible.

We must have faith that an enlightened citizenship can be trusted with self-government and there can be no enlightenment where thought and speech are not free. Organized for action and with the light turned on, America will prove red-blooded enough to withstand any disease that may assail her in this or any other hour of peril.

Let us have honest opinions from honest throats in community assemblies. Let every individual have a fair chance for the orderly expression of his mind for only so may be discovered the common interest. There has been too much use of language to conceal thought. It is time now for the men of short and simple words which convey ideas that all may understand. Too often the confusion has come from those who talk about our need of a psychology, when our need is common sense. "Be what you want people to think you are," says one, but when it is quoted by one of these throwers of dust it becomes instead "never imagine yourself to be otherwise from what it might appear to others that you were or might have been was not otherwise than what you had been would have appeared to them to be otherwise."

The organization of the citizenship of communities, in neighborly assemblies is the next step in democracy. Perhaps because of that

very fact it is meeting with opposition and probably will meet with opposition until it is an accomplished fact, embedded forever in our system. Always and everywhere there have been those who regard everything old as sacred and everything new as dangerous. This is but a new use of an old institution, but still there are those who protest against its adoption. It is the same old fight. Every new idea must run the gauntlet of jeers and sneers, while the idea that means social welfare and equal opportunity must endure bitter and organized opposition as well.

The idea of community organization, with its promise of real people's rule is opposed by those who honestly fear democracy. It is opposed by every special interest which fears that public enlightenment will end its exploiting power. It is opposed by every corrupt political "boss" and parasite, who know well that the one sure way of putting the "machine" out of control is to put the people in control.

It is opposed by some who have simply lost the vision of progress and have ranged themselves on the side of reaction. Great men have in the past sinned against the light. Daniel Webster bitterly opposed the admission of Washington territory into the Union because he said that representatives in Congress could not

make the journey to the National Capitol during their terms of office.

George Westinghouse, inventor of the air-brake, went to Cornelius Vanderbilt, the railroad king, with his epoch-making invention and asked for assistance in putting it on the market. Vanderbilt's greeting was brusque and final, "I have no time to talk to a fool who thinks he can stop a railroad train with wind."

When Westinghouse had found others to give him a helping hand and he was basking in success and prosperity, he, too, lost the vision. The Wright brothers came to him and asked to explain their aeroplane designs. Westinghouse refused in almost the words of Vanderbilt on that other day, "Only a fool would spend time trying to fly like a bird."

After all, every standpatter and reactionary, is a lineal descendant of his prototype, the old philosopher of classic days, whose name was Duns. His disciples were known as Dunsmen or Dunses. Only men of proved learning were admitted to this school. Then they stagnated, refused to recognize new ideas, shut their doors on progress. Their name, once a term of honor became a term of derision for foolish ignorance. To-day, as then, the reactionaries and standpatters are the dunces of the world.

Every argument which was levelled against

the plan to establish a system of free, common schools in America has been used against the use of school buildings as community centers. The bitterest fight in the political history of Pennsylvania occurred when the legislature was about to decide as to the adoption or rejection of the public school.

But the forces of light and progress won, just as they always triumph in the end. To-day when any person or interest in the United States opposes the community use of the public school building for honest, orderly, all-sided consideration of every matter of general concern, it may be taken as a fact that back of that opposition is something which needs to have the light turned upon it. Nothing that is good can be hurt by open consideration by citizens in their neighborhood assembly.

#### REACTION DOOMED TO DEFEAT.

Rest assured, all the forces of stagnation and reaction are doomed to final defeat. The people of America, long disorganized and inarticulate are determined to try democracy. Their enlightened self-interest teaches them that they have failed to accomplish real sovereignty, in spite of all glittering, spread-eagle phrases and they know it is due to the fact that the several sections of the community are fighting among



themselves. People's rule means coöperation, mutual understanding and a common desire. The people of America want to get together and in their hearts are resolving to pay the price for it. That is all that is necessary. In the commercial world, every wheel of industry starts, every avenue of trade opens, when there is a public demand for any article, be it pins or pianos, backed by a willingness to pay the price for it. The law holds good in other spheres than the commercial. The American people will have what they want and for which they will pay the price. Groping in the darkness of division and thwarted purposes, they are seeing the necessity of getting together as neighbors, not as partisans; as friends, not as strangers, and in the end they will have their way.

Once the people have seen the power and have known the joy of getting together, there will be no return to jungle warfare. It required a general order from the German Army authorities to prevent German soldiers from fraternizing with the British, in January, 1917, after they had played football games together on Christmas Day. There will be no authority able to prevent the fraternization of the American people, once they have come together in fellowship, once they have carried out the desire

of Theodore Roosevelt, "We can and shall make every school house a senate chamber of the people."

Surely, surely, the school houses of all America, in city and countryside, in mountain district and prairie land, will prove to be the springs and streams, feeding the great river of Liberty, destined to enrich the whole earth with its refreshing tide.

By lighting the lamps in the school houses for the gathering of the people we shall raise aloft the beacon light of democracy. Outlining our land boundaries and watery margins, from the Great Lakes by Niagara, and the St. Lawrence, by the Atlantic beaches, far out to Porto Rico, beyond the Gulf and Caribbean, Uncle Sam's great southern lakes, to the new Virgin Islands, across Panama, up the western coast past the golden shores of California to the Columbia and Puget Sound, along the international boundary eastward again—as the sun goes down and the stars come out over eastern Maine—the lighted windows of school houses will twinkle out of the dark; cheery, welcoming lights of school house community centers.

Westward with the spreading darkness will shine out community center lights in river valleys of the Penobscot and Kennebec, along the Connecticut, the Hudson and the Mohawk; by



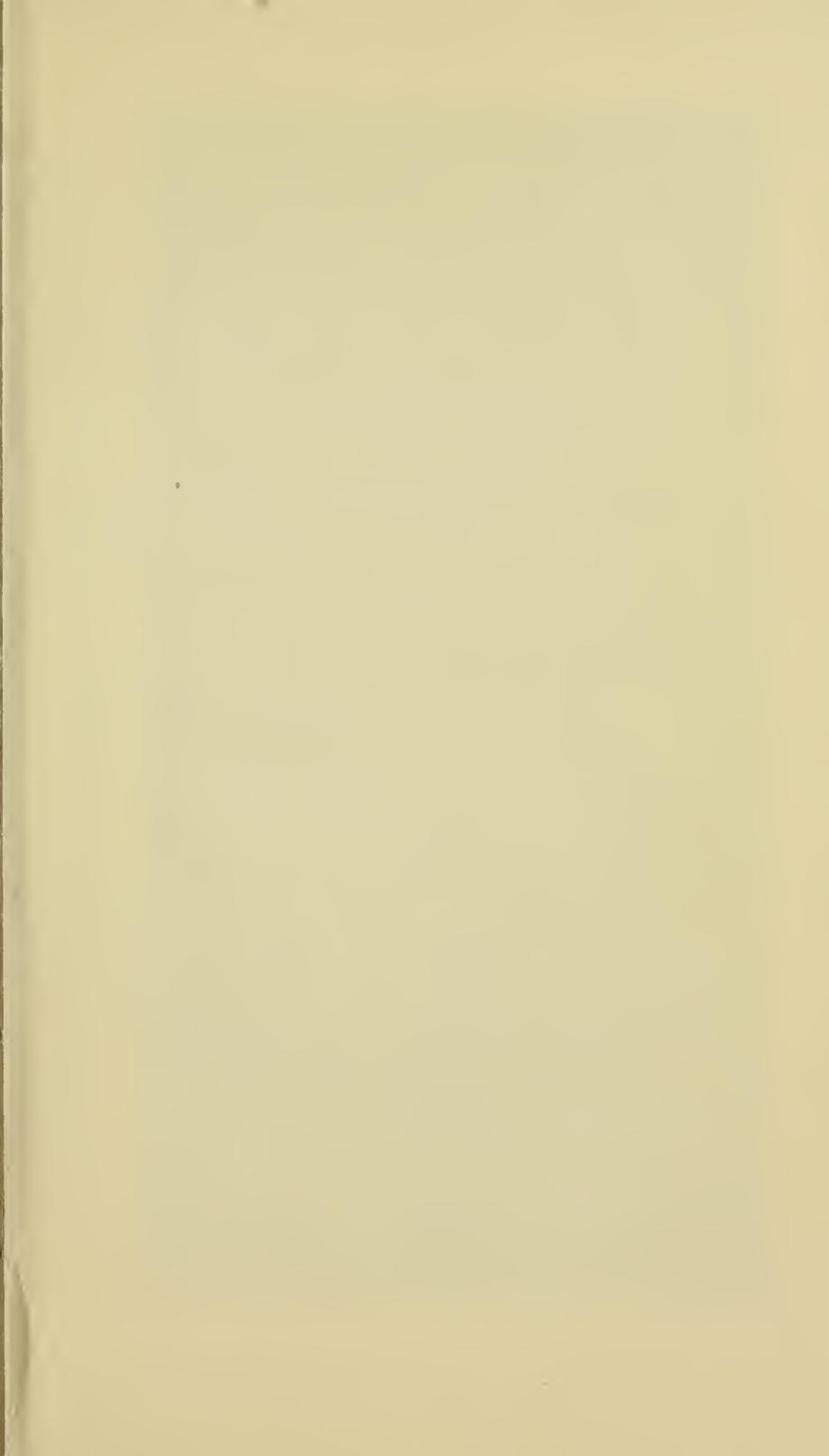
the Delaware and the James, they follow the Santee and the Savannah and "way down on the Swanee River" the inspiring strains of "Dixie" will stir the blood of old folks and young, gathered in neighborly counsel to discuss the problems of America, the greatest human enterprise of the world.

From where Louisiana spans our mighty spinal river, sparkling lights from school house windows will trace the course of the Father of Waters and all the nations enmeshing valleys of his 25,000 miles of tributary waterways.

Our harried neighbors south of the Rio Grande will hear the friendly voices from lighted doorways and with the hope of better days send the hail "Amigos" across the northern bank.

There will be lights down by Colorado's canyons, on solitary mesas, and garden spots redeemed from desert wastes. In farm villages across the prairies, in little mining towns far up the slopes of the Rockies and the Sierra Nevadas, and lonely lumber camps among tall firs and gigantic redwoods in valleys of the Cascades and Coast Range Mountains, will be lighted windows and folks gathered in their school houses in the splendid kindly task of making a nation.

There will be lights in New York City, metrop-





DECISION THROUGH COMMON COUNSEL.

Suffrage debate in school auditorium at Rochester, N. Y., home city of Susan B. Anthony.

olis of the world; in Washington, where gather representatives to speak and act for all the people; in Pittsburgh, where flaming furnaces turn night into day; in Chicago, youthful marvel of enterprise and achievement; in San Francisco, speaking of an heroic rising from the ashes of disaster; in all the cities between, the kindly lights of community school houses will twinkle an invitation to all to break down the barriers of loneliness and doubt and distrust and become indeed members of America.

### THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE FOLKS.

It is the fellowship of folks. It is the diffusion of light by radiation, even as every particle of air is a miniature sun, radiating light in every direction. Without that principle in action, it would be impossible to illuminate a room by means of a window, for there would be but shafts from the direct sun rays. So too, must be the enlightenment of democracy. Washington truly said, "In proportion as the structure of the government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion be enlightened." There cannot be this enlightenment unless the individual has an opportunity to know and extend and reflect the truth, in the mutual conference which always modifies and improves the thoughts of individuals.

The fellowship of the folks. It is a desire fundamentally American. With it we shall have all the splendor we boast to-day, without the shame; we shall have all the enterprise without the enmity; we shall have all the statesmanship, without the treason on its brow; we shall have all the legislation, without the lawlessness; all the glory without the greed, all the steps upward to genuine brotherhood, without the sinister paths through the regions of strife, bequeathed to man by Satan, Father of Division and the eternal Anarch of the world.

Fair as a vision of the psalmist spreads this Promised Land, America, under the new order. A people, freed from hates and prejudices and ignorances, realizing democracy by getting together for happiness, moving forward to the supreme goal of life.

To every believer in democracy, man and woman alike, comes the ringing challenge to help institute these community centers, so that they may become a living force in every American neighborhood, just as the public school is to-day.

“Make wide the doorway of the school,  
Around whose sill the millions await—  
The cradle of the common rule,  
The forum of a stronger state.

“Make broad the bar and bid appear,  
The questions, clamorous to be tried,  
And let the final judges hear,  
Themselves, the questions they decide.

“Write bold the text for age to read,  
The lesson not discerned by youth  
And raise the altar of a creed,  
Whose only article is Truth.

“Though fair and dear the ancient mold,  
Wherein the burning thought was cast,  
Pour not the New World’s glowing gold  
Into the patterns of the past.

“Whatever channels lead apart  
The currents of the lives of men,  
The blood that left the Common Heart,  
Shall leap with common pulse again.”





## Part II

### Back of the Ballot—and Beyond



## II

### BACK OF THE BALLOT—AND BEYOND.

During all the years of recorded history before the adoption of the American Constitution and the foundation of this Republic, there was no government to which the truthful historian could point and say "There was a government which efficiently served its people."

To-day we are in the midst of chaos and confusion as the result of a breaking political system. Unless the defects are cured the historian of the future will include the American form of government with all the failures of the past and record the verdict, "Thou, too, hast been weighed in the balance and found wanting."

We found ourselves at war with Germany and Austria-Hungary, two years after hostilities had ceased. Obnoxious and repressive legislation, necessary for war but intolerable in time of peace, remained on the statute books, because there was no power to compel President and Senate to take decisive action for the common good.

This collapse was preceded by the breakdown

of the political system when the nation was challenged by war with the German Empire. On every hand were heard the cries "We must get together" but it was found that with all our efforts we could not voluntarily get together. The only way we could attain the unity imperative for victory was by despotic power in the hands of one man—the President of the United States.

Overboard went every old-time principle of democracy. The people and their chosen representatives abdicated their authority and autocracy was enthroned.

There was no other way. Our political institutions had not trained the citizenship for self-reliant coöperation, either in peace or war. Strangely enough, the war to "make democracy safe around the world" was won without the aid of democracy at home. We conquered Prussia but in doing so practically Prussianized ourselves.

The war over, we saw the executive power of the nation in the hands of one party and the legislative power controlled by the opposition party. We saw friction and nullification, a government by obstruction. One branch of the government played politics against the other and both put partisan advantage above the public welfare.

We see inexperienced men named as heads of great departments of government, to be removed or transferred as soon as they have gained knowledge of their business. We see duplication of activities, with countless millions of dollars worse than wasted, in developing an inefficient, cumbersome organization, doomed to collapse from its own weight.

Warring interests battle for conquest over the people's rights. Social spirit, the action of man on man, fails to achieve the triumph over selfishness and greed.

There is distrust of law-making bodies, suspicion of agents elected to public office. It is not the discontent of the disfranchised but of citizens, possessed of the ballot. Newspapers join in the jibe at legislators that the trouble with their political economy is that it is all political. A magazine editor tells of a congressman who borrowed \$1,000 of a pawnbroker on no security save his honor, just as a loan shark law was being considered and then remarks that some pawnbrokers are getting mighty careless about their collateral.

A legislature expelled regularly-elected representatives because of their political opinions; a congress refused to deal with tragically mounting prices of necessities, though retail price lists made sober-minded men see red.



Many citizens express doubt of the efficacy of American institutions, while others openly advocate the dagger and dynamite.

But even in the face of such challenges as these in a government by parties we see lines running across political parties instead of between them. Leaders in each party represent all shades of political opinion, while upon every issue of importance there is enough difference of opinion in both major parties to cause a split, once concrete action is attempted.

In the pre-convention presidential campaign of 1920 there was witnessed on one hand the use of greater sums of money than ever before and on the other an unprecedented indifference on the part of the voters to these costly appeals for their franchise. Only a minority of the vote was cast where presidential preference was possible or where delegates were to be elected.

Cries of scandal and corruption were raised against candidates for the presidential nominations, who undertook to do the very thing our system makes imperative. The United States Senate Investigating Committee showed that, except in a few rare instances, the money expended by candidates, with immense campaign funds, was used for entirely legitimate and necessary expenses.

Any candidate whose name and record are not

household terms, must have nation-wide organization and publicity. He must have state and local headquarters, literature in vast quantities, and professional campaigners to carry his arguments to special groups of people. The 1920 presidential campaign cost more than \$15,000,000 and the vast proportion of this money was spent for these purposes.

Because General Wood, Governor Lowden and others undertook to perform the task our present system requires, they were judged unavailable for the office to which they aspired. Though they had made a nation-wide appeal and received nation-wide support, their chances were wrecked by the simple process of turning the spotlight on their money-bags and shouting, "Scandal."

With their rejection came the selection of men in both parties who had made little or no effort to place their candidacies directly before the people of the nation and secure a mandate from the voters themselves.

The basis of the American form of government is majority rule—the right of the people to be arbiters of men and measures. But the people did not select either presidential candidate as their choice for President. One did not have a solid delegation from his own state and the other's pledged delegates were far fewer

than those sent by the people to vote for other candidates.

In November, the people had merely the privilege of voting for one or the other of candidates named by the very few leaders, gathered at the national conventions. This is but a shadow-privilege for the right to select candidates is far more vital than the right to elect them.

#### THE WEAKNESS LIES IN LACK OF COÖRDINATION.

What is wrong? What is the source of all these ills that menace the American form of government and witness the breakdown of our political institutions? Not now are our evils due to the weakness of the national government as in that other critical period between the Revolution and the adoption of the Constitution. They are due solely to the weakness of national citizenship organization. Lack of unity and coördination of individual citizens for the common welfare has robbed the citizens of the sense of membership in the supreme work of making America make good.

We have fallen into the net spread in the path of all democracies, the evil of divided and antagonistic interests, which cause citizens to lose their common purposes and forget the general welfare in the midst of efforts to secure for certain groups or classes advantages over all the

others. Domestic contentions, revolving about the desires of a part and not the good of the whole, have been a source of the breakdown of political institutions. Americans have not been thinking and acting and serving together, but sectionally and factionally.

During the period of the creation and establishment of America there was steadfast co-operation for common ends. The immortal Declaration of Independence embodied the will of the people of the thirteen colonies when it declared that "all men are created equal." That is a simple statement but it contains dynamite enough to strike down forever the doctrine of the Divine right of one man or one set of men to rule their fellows. It declared that the people are the source of all power, that just government rests on the consent of the governed and that the citizenship of a nation have an inherent right to change the government whenever and however it is deemed by them to be best.

But the most important words in that mighty document were not its statement of the wisdom of democracy, or its proofs of the vicious folly of one man rule; not even its announcement that henceforth the subjection of America to any other nation was ended. The most important words in that great charter were those with which it closed and without which those

that preceded would have had no significance:

“For the support of the Declaration with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we *mutually pledge to each other* our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor.”

That sense of unity and mutual obligation and common duty was a visible fact. Meeting and milling in their town halls the people worked out their political salvation.

In community assemblies men voiced the common thought of the common people and, because they did so, were chosen leaders. It was the spirit of freedom, bred in the town meeting, that made Lexington and Yorktown possible. Independence was won in the hearts of the people, through common counsel, before the Declaration was written and its red-blooded challenges to despotism but voiced the agreement of their will.

It is a far cry from that resolution of unity, throbbing with mutual purpose, to the present lack of neighborliness, the mingling of citizens without fellowship, the contacts of the people without intercourse, the absence of collective opinion and the cold and dismal lines of division.

We have so far departed from the old ideal that the Declaration of Independence, our first and foremost state paper, is branded in high



official circles as a dangerous document, to be kept away from the people, whenever possible.

For example, it was early in 1920, when Edward J. Ward, of the United States Bureau of Education, gave a series of lectures in the Franklin School in Washington, for the benefit of community workers, public school teachers and others interested in educational subjects. He announced in his opening lecture that he would use as the basis of his discourses, the American Declaration of Independence and requested those present to bring a printed copy of the document with them for the future lectures.

Mrs. William Wolff Smith, wife of a major in the United States Army, was present for the opening lecture. Her husband had been connected with the printing office at the Walter Reed Hospital, where the soldier's paper, *The Comeback*, was printed. He had been transferred from his position there and the boys had often voiced a desire to give him some testimonial of their regard.

Mrs. Smith conceived the idea that such a testimonial could be given and at the same time a valuable service performed, if there were printed a few hundred folders containing the Declaration of Independence. These, coming from the printing office of the soldiers' institu-



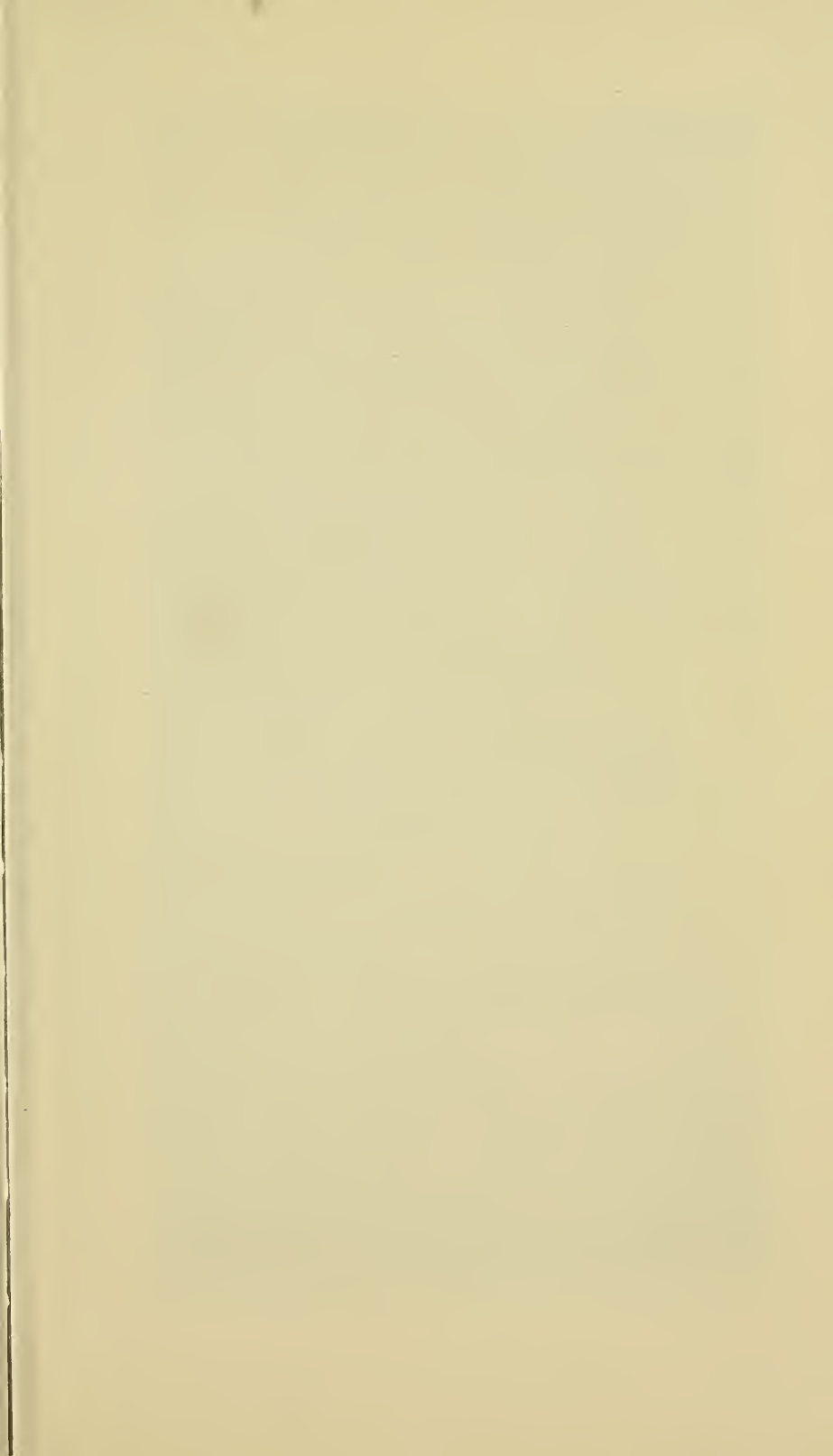
tion, would be a souvenir gift and also serve as text for those attending the Ward lectures.

The plan was placed first before an officer of the Surgeon General's Office and he approved it and the copy was sent to the printing office. The folder was to contain a title page, with the poem,

Breathes there a man, with soul so dead  
Who never to himself hath said,  
"This is my own, my native land."

#### THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND THE WAR DEPARTMENT.

The additional pages were to contain only the text of the Declaration of American Independence. When the folders were not delivered as promised, Mrs. Smith went to the office. She was put off with evasive replies, but insisted on knowing why the folders were not printed. At last the officer in charge told her that it had been officially decided that it would be unwise to print the Declaration of Independence by the War Department, because it would be an act of discourtesy to our friends, the British, and also that in the inflamed state of the public mind, such a publication might increase social unrest and the tendency to Bolshevism. The officer stated, without equivocation, that, for these reasons, the copies of the Declaration of Independence would not be issued from the printing office





THE EMANCIPATION OF THE BALLOT BOX.

Election scene of to-day, with ballot box in public school, at Sauk City, Wisconsin.  
(Insert) Former location of same ballot box in jail.

maintained by the War Department of the United States Government.

Such an incident points out the long and devious path we have trod since seventy-six. It shows the belief, so false to fundamental Americanism, that the people must be dealt with in kindergarten fashion. It is assumption by agents of the people, of the power of the people and such public officers, in themselves, typify the very usurped power against which the Declaration of Independence was directed.

Perhaps such officials honestly believe that a study of the Declaration will send the American people out in a body against Great Britain, or lead them to set up a Bolshevist government and destroy the institution of their own private property. But at least, it will be admitted by all that such a belief does not harmonize with Americanism and that the officials who hold it should have no public position under our form of government. Indeed, any official in our government, from the lowest to the highest, who exercises such arbitrary authority, hatches treason to the nation.

Our motto to-day should be "Back to the unity of the Declaration." Somehow there must be secured the unified public mind which comes from common participation in government and mutual rights to a place in the fraternity of

America. We must Americanize the political system and secure to the people their right to "act and speak and serve together," so that, all else forgot, they may pledge their hearts, their lives, their fortunes, their sacred honor, to America first and America forever.

Over in France in the early days of 1918 regiments of American and Australian soldiers were brigaded together. As a German prisoner was being brought through their lines one day, a brawny Australian pulled off the "Gott Mitt Uns" belt buckle, which was a part of every Prussian equipment, and asked the prisoner what it meant. He explained that it meant that Germany could never be defeated, that the good old German Gott would see that all Germany's enemies were overthrown. "What do we care if you have got your German Gott with you," said the Australian soldier, "We've got the Yankees with us." To-day, as never before America needs the Yankees, all of them, with her, for victory over the spirit of caste and class and group, which menace democracy. One thing is assured; we shall never overcome the evils which surround us, unless in the individual citizens of America there is aroused a sense of partnership in government and a fair chance to exercise his voice and vote in its affairs.

The future of America depends upon secur-



ing a method for the vast American electorate to attain that previous agreement of mind and will, without which primaries and elections are either games of chance or a series of machine-ruled ratification meetings. There must be found the way by which the people may discover what they want and then have power to execute their desire. There must be not only opportunity for the expression of organized public opinion at the ballot box, but also for the expression of the preventive power of public opinion. In other words, the whole citizenship must be given the opportunity to consider and discuss mutually the merits of the candidates for whom they are to vote and they must also be able to keep a guiding hand on candidates after they become public officials, to reach out and express their will to their agents in places of power.

That means that the people must get together "for common counsel, so that they may discover the common interest." As Theodore Roosevelt said, "It is impossible for one man to accomplish anything by himself. He must associate with others and they must throw their weight together." The people must be able to get together as citizens and neighbors if they are to end the misunderstandings and enmities which have prevented unity of feeling and purpose.



There can be no health in a body unless there is close interrelationship of all the cells and parts of the body. So there cannot be health in a community without coördination and such contact between all members as constitutes union.

There is absolutely no way to secure unity with liberty save by bringing folks into fellowship, so that they may understand each other and through such understanding, create common sympathies and common feelings. There is no way to attain democracy save by having people know each other.

The importance of the assembling of the people was recognized by the founders of the Republic, when they incorporated in the so-called Bill of Rights the provision that Congress should have no power to interfere with this fundamental right. But the right of the people to assemble is worthless unless there is a place of assembly. When Congress or state legislature or city council assembles for the duty of discussion and decision, splendid buildings are ready for use, paid for by the people whose business is to be transacted by these delegated officials.

It is admitted by every sane man that without these places of assembly there could be no performance of duty. But, if it is important for these agents of the people to have their places

of assembly, is it not vastly more important that the people, creators of congressmen, state legislators and city councilmen have a place where they may gather of right, upon the common ground of performing their duties as sovereign citizens?

### A CAPITOL FOR EACH COMMUNITY.

If there were not buildings already available it would be the part of wisdom to erect in each community, a commodious capitol of the people, for the sole purpose of providing the place for that assembly, whose right is guaranteed the people by the Constitution.

Fortunately, there is already in each unit of neighborhood a public school building, owned by all the people, without regard to any lines of sect or creed or party or income. These buildings are conveniently located and they are capable of being used as the gathering place for neighborly participation in the control of America.

The public school house should be the polling place, the voting headquarters in every community. It is the common building of the community's best coöperation. The ballot box has no place in association with the jail, the suppression tool of human force, nor the fire engine, the suppression instrument of nature's force.

These are negative, while government must be positive, a constructive process of coöperation. The ballot box is the ark of the covenant and it belongs in the building which typifies the most distinctive American institution. Placed there, it gives added dignity to the act of voting and becomes the center about which all the rest of the structure will be planned.

Still, voting is but one phase of the duty of citizenship. If there is to be intelligent voting there must be full deliberation, with fair hearing and free discussion. Otherwise, the phrase "will of the people" is empty and meaningless.

What the town hall was to New England in other crisis times, yes, even more than that, the school house must be to-day in this pivotal point of American history. We have left out the most important thing in our democracy, provision for mutual deliberation and discussion, in the neighborhoods and little wonder the machinery of democracy no longer functions properly.

It is told by some one that a tinker appeared in a rural community one day and a clock was given him to mend. He worked at it for a considerable time, volubly explaining his ability in fixing things and how fortunate it was that he appeared just when he did. When he was ready to leave and about to receive his pay, the

farmer noticed that a wheel had been left out. The tinker's attention was called to the omission but he met it cheerily, "Oh, that's all right, that's what's the matter with it."

The mainspring of democracy is coöperation and common action. National tinkers have left it out, with the result we have already seen. It is time for restoration of this supremely important part of the mechanism of democratic government. Let the people get together regardless of all lines of division, as neighbors and citizens, to discuss all problems and candidates from the standpoint of the public welfare and the common mind, wiser than any single mind, kinder than any single heart, more just than any single judgment, will sway the destinies of America and meet the greatest single need of to-day.

The proposal is simply that the citizenship of America, now organized by voting districts for the purpose of decision shall organize for the orderly deliberation which is essential to intelligent decision. It is to have the citizenship, possessor of sovereign power, do exactly what every body of subordinate public officials now does as a matter of course.

Such organization means a membership which includes every citizen in the community. It must be all-inclusive, with no qualification

required, save that of citizenship. It is the real Voters League, with every voter a member by right. Of course, it will be democratically organized, the officials chosen freely by the community. In order to function effectively, the duties of community secretary, the elected servant of the community, will be performed by an official, who is not a volunteer worker, but is paid from public funds. His is a distinctly public service, more important than that of the clerks in Congress or legislature or council, and should be performed in every community by a secretary, equipped and paid by the public.

With such organization on the basis of citizenship, not party, the prejudices of partisanship will give way to the rule of reason, brought out in open discussion and mutual conference. Then it will be seen that the use of independent judgment on the part of the citizens is a supreme duty and that following a party blindly is not a pious act. Though the whole future of democracy depends on independence of action, in the past the path of the independent in politics has been beset with thorns. He has been forced to endure the siege of misunderstanding, the fire of ridicule and the storm of criticism. The whole political system urged him to seek shelter behind the walls of party prejudice, custom and selfish interest and plead party loyalty as balm



for his violated conscience. With a fair chance in the assembly of neighbors gathered together for the public weal, the independent thinker will not be put to disadvantage before the cowardly creature of a party machine, with all marks of the collar about his neck.

Five years of common sense community organization for practice in citizenship, both in the home environment and the wider fields of states and nation, will put an end to machine rule. The average citizen, once his eyes are opened to the common interest and his hands struck into those of his neighbors for effective action, will eliminate this costly, inefficient, corrupt, control. There is not a district in America where a "machine" can win against an organized citizenship.

The whole trouble lies in the fact that thus far, the only sustained effort to secure participation in governmental action on the part of the electorate has been through party organization. The party says, "Let every voter join a political party and stick with it to the finish, and have a part in its efforts to control the government." This plan has signally failed because possession of the right to vote does not in itself make the opinion of the majority a controlling factor. There must be an opportunity for voters to make up their minds on the problems of the



day, not from any one-sided presentation but in the light of all the facts. Knowledge is necessary to proper action and "ken" and "can" are the same, in etymology and in fact.

The task of all-sided discussion is not undertaken by the party organization, under the present system, for the simple reason that it would lessen its own power. In the end, therefore, the party organization seeks to secure the agreement of a considerable number of persons, not on the basis of the public welfare but through an appeal to selfish interests. The party makes these electors of one mind by making them a group, able to profit from the public plunder and this cohesive power is sufficient for the erection of the party "machine." They thus make the party to be "a body of men united for promoting by their joint endeavors, their own interests, by methods on which they are all agreed."

The "machine," composed of persons who know exactly what they want, has a tremendous advantage. When the mass of the citizenship is unorganized and inarticulate any organized group, with a definite program, can carry out its will. Bolshevism conquered Russia because the people were in a state of confusion and chaos, while a comparatively few "Reds" were organized in efficient fashion. The "machine"

takes possession of the party and by using the sacramental sanction of the party name, with all its original traditions and associations, it succeeds in rallying many decent men to its support. Its whole idea of political strategy is the laying of traps to catch the unwary. For this reason, the semblance of popular control is preserved and cunningly devised arrangements to secure minority control are hidden as far as possible from the public gaze.

Members of the "machine" use their power to monopolize public office for themselves, to gain wealth and to protect each other from punishment for their criminal acts. They huckster offices and trade in legislation. They manipulate the ballot and rob the ballot box. They pollute politics and damn patriotic aspiration and become enemies of all progress and sworn foes of morality, respectability and patriotism. Government by the "machine" is the worst possible government. It is government by the worst possible elements in the worst possible way. It is a nefarious system of minority rule, by groups that need money for success and repay financial benefactors with grants of special privilege.

The reaction on the part of the great body of the citizenship is seen in the refusal of voters to take any part in politics and the disgust with

which the whole sphere of politics is viewed. The very name "politician" is a synonym for contempt. Seeing the prostitution of every idea of right and justice and the subversion of every true principle of government, many citizens wash their hands of it all, while at the same time a menacing fire of protest smoulders in their hearts and many begin to grope blindly toward other methods of governmental change than through the ballot box.

#### CIVIC INDIFFERENCE AND ITS CAUSE.

Now, the first basis of democratic government is active participation of the great mass of the citizens. When only a minority of the voters goes to the polls, it is easy to denounce these negligent ones as slackers and traitors and Bolsheviks. Every reformer for a generation has poured out the vials of his wrath on these passive citizens who do not express their will at the ballot box, and a leading magazine has published a special article in which the "sleeping" voter is termed the "greatest menace to America."

When a vast number of voters deliberately and voluntarily disfranchise themselves in a government where theoretically every desired revolution is social, political or economic life may be accomplished through the simple proc-

ess of putting a sufficient number of votes in the ballot box on the day of election, it is high time to make an earnest study of the reasons for such indifference.

I contend that loss of the sense of partnership and ignorance of the facts which follow such loss explain the indifference to civic duties on the part of so many voters. The voter who is deeply interested in a candidate or measure is always on hand on the day of election. And always and everywhere in the United States the uninfluenced citizen, who has no interest in a measure or candidate and no opinions about either, instinctively refuses to vote at all.

Every "sleeping" voter in America is simply an example of the lack of opportunity to exert a genuine influence in civic affairs. If that opportunity can be provided, the sleepers will awake, ready and eager to perform their full part in the task of making America make good. The interest, which is essential, can be cultivated only by direct individual contact with community action, in neighborly, all-inclusive organization, where out of full and free discussion, the common interest may be discovered. Only thus may the average citizen, like the politician under present conditions, know exactly what he is doing on election day.

Those communities which are to-day termed

“corrupt and contented” or “Bolshevik and discontented” are simply communities robbed of the essential of democracy, and the together-spirit which comes from the touched elbows of citizens meeting on a common level for the common good. I have seen a town in the Pittsburgh district transformed from an indifferent, “boss-ruled” community into a municipality where 90% of the vote was cast at every primary and election, simply because there was effected in the public school house an organization of all the citizens, where at regular meetings, every candidate and issue was discussed on the basis of the community welfare rather than partisan success. L. E. McKenzie, of Donora, Pa., tells in a graphic way of the overthrow of the spirit of revolt and Bolshevism, through the so-called Donora Community Service, by which a sense of solidarity was effected, even though the organization itself lacked certain fundamentals of real organization of the community.

Politics in America has become simply a question of nomination and election, men competing for office on platforms meant to be only doors to that office, or rather the party platform is, in the words of the old negro “jest the same as de platform in de railroad car when you’s goin’ somewhar; its the thing you uses to get in on.”



The platforms adopted by the Republican party at Chicago and the Democratic party at San Francisco for the 1920 presidential campaign were omnibus programs, one plank on top of the other, with no connecting purpose or philosophy. The planks were shuffled like a pack of cards, some played at one time and some at another, as best suited the occasion. Both platforms were manufactured by hand-picked Committees on Resolutions and the party membership were not consulted.

The chief issues bring forth only indecisive utterances and the platform builders seem to desire to use slippery elm planks. Few voters will read and profess to understand all the verbiage which has been designated as political creeds for the guidance of American voters. It is doubtful if there are a thousand Republicans or a thousand Democrats who sincerely believe in every plank of their respective platforms. Even the candidates have mental reservations and make their own interpretations even as did President Wilson in reference to the one-term plank in the platform on which he was elected in 1912.

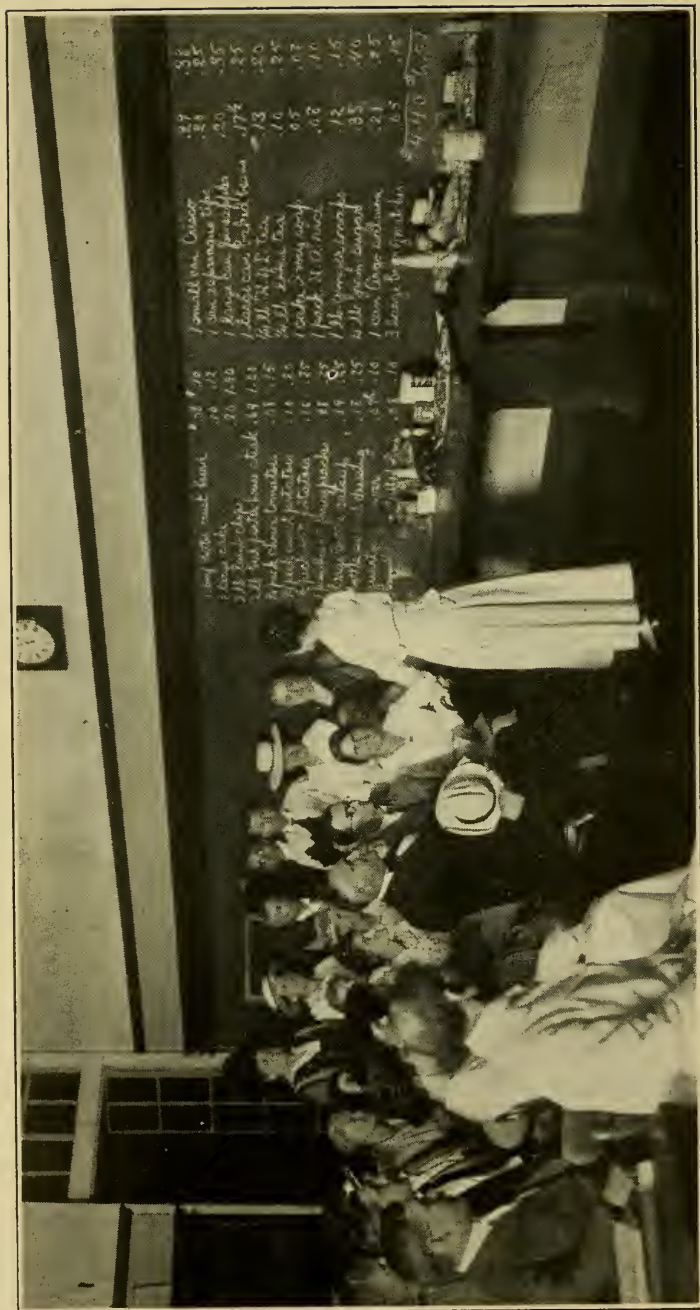
Under such conditions the mass of the voters have nothing left but to accept the interpretation of campaign speakers and writers, or look to the candidates, or fall back on old party asso-



ciations and leave the platforms for political historians. Such elections are verdicts of the minority of qualified voters and even on the part of those who do vote, are ambiguous and uncertain, whose meaning is wrangled over for four years. It is conceivable that a party, under present practice, may succeed in an election and yet not a single plank in the platform would secure the approval of a majority of the voters, if separately submitted. It is not to be wondered at that such elections do not settle issues but actually prevent their settlement by a definite expression of the people at the polls.

Such a situation means popular ignorance of the attitude of the parties on many important issues and as surely leads to indifference as night follows day. The people know that the platforms are not simple, direct statements upon which parties ask for support, with the determination to embody them into law, if successful. The people know well too, that the heat and rancor of a brief campaign, permit no opportunity for accurately estimating any candidate. They know that the epileptic fit which seizes the politicians every four years, or every two years, and which they seek to communicate to the people, is not the mood for sane judgment. They know how partisanship exaggerates virtue and weakness. They have come to believe that





# STUDYING THE PROBLEM.

Conference in public school community center, Washington, D. C., on the high cost of living.

politics is the mother of lies and having no other method of securing information than through political literature, which deifies one candidate and spatters slime and filth on another, they have grown callous and indifferent to it all. Our system has palsied the American citizenship in the same fashion as the great eagle, which a naturalist describes as having been exposed to a storm of sleet and icy rain, and being encased in a veritable coat of mail. Its wings became helpless and it was led along the sea-shore by a boy it could have carried off in its talons, had it possessed its full powers.

#### TRUTH AND CLEAR-THINKING MUST DECIDE ELECTIONS.

We must make it impossible for falsehood, misrepresentation and abuse to be the determining factors in elections. What is needed is truth, not denunciation; clear thinking, and honest utterances, not muddy anger and distortion of facts. The present system gives power to those who are poisoners of the springs from which the people must drink. To rid the nation of these public enemies, by removing their opportunity, so that the springs may be pure and wholesome, will be the boon beyond all others to America and it will rid the nation of the menace of the "sleeping" voter.

There are those who advocate compulsory voting to end the indifference of citizens. Such a plan is both unfair and dangerous. The government has no right to penalize a man for not voting, when he has no interest and no methods have been furnished him by which he could secure the accurate knowledge, from all-sided discussion, on which to base interest. If, without the interest which comes from a sense of mutual responsibility, he could be compelled to vote, his ballot would simply add one more to the side of misgovernment and corruption.

We have not had the participation in government which democracy demands, because of lack of organization at the grass roots. It cannot be said that democracy has failed, for democracy is government directly responsible to the people and this has never been tried. Our trouble has not been too much liberty, as some critics assert, but a want of liberty to men to secure the agreement of their wills for the common cause.

There can be no sovereignty of the people unless the people have full and fair opportunity to formulate their sovereign will, so that they may control legislation and public policy. Organized in their local communities, ready to meet in orderly fashion every new question, the people may say indeed to every public official as



did the Cortez of old to every new King of Aragon, "We, who are as good as you, salute you."

This organized citizenship will prove at once that politics is not a synonym for primary or general election, but instead is the science of government. The people will be organized to demand guarantees of character, capacity and proper policy from candidates, and they will also be able to enforce the responsibility of public officials. The idea of official responsibility to an unorganized citizenship is a fallacy. As a matter of fact, most actions of public officials are so mixed up with party politics that they are really responsibilities of the party and are so regarded.

At present, too many officials are like the Member of Congress, to whom it was remarked that his constituents could not understand his speech on the Federal Reserve Act. "That's good," was his reply, "it took me seven days to write it that way." It is told of Senator Aldrich that he gave strict instructions to his secretary to give no answers to embarrassing questions when he was not at hand to corroborate or deny. One day a visitor came into the office and asked if he might secure certain information. The secretary told him that he would have to wait for the Senator's return.



“But,” insisted the visitor, “I only wished to ask Senator Aldrich’s initials.” The secretary pondered awhile, pulled down the shade, coughed slightly and after much hesitancy replied, “I do not care, my dear sir, to answer that question. I shall be obliged to refer you to the Senator himself for such information.”

Now, of course every public official should be personally responsible to his constituents in governmental matters and every individual activity or influence of every official is a proper subject for the closest public scrutiny. Holders of a public mandate should not be permitted to hide behind the mask of party, neither should they be permitted to become victims of party tyranny.

The faithful public official is robbed of his greatest right when he does not receive the mutual coöperation of his constituents. The encouragement of the people for honorable and efficient service is his highest compensation. Few men can live and grow outside the sunshine of public favor. There should be a League of Appreciation for faithful officials but no club or society or group fellowship of any kind can become that league; it must be the league of all the people.

Former Secretary of the Interior Franklin K. Lane, in an address to the student body at Wil-

liams College forcibly presented the importance of public appreciation of faithful service, when he said:

“If democracy is to be a success, we must stimulate in every possible way the courage, the constructiveness and sober wisdom of our officials. Honesty is not a rare virtue in public men, but courage is, because men soon find that by a conciliation of antagonistic forces they go far. The “pussyfooter,” the evader, the responsibility shirker, the passer of the buck in ordinary times, is a successful man in politics. And when society finds a man who shows nerve he should be promoted.”

How can the people show appreciation unless they know the records of their agents, and how can the people know their records unless they are organized into citizenship assemblies? Yet the need of watching all public officials is one of the supreme needs in a government by the people. Old John Dickerson was right when, more than a century ago, he said:

“Let us take care of every man in office and keep watchful eyes upon him. We should be better served if this vigilance were more general. Let his behaviour be publicly and privately canvassed. Let us demonstrate that we mean the common weal and not the gratifications of ill nature. The public is interested in

its servants. No virtues, no services, should exempt them from such scrutinies. It is not only the right, it is the duty of the public to make them. Liberty has been often greatly suppressed by a disuse of this right, by a neglect of this duty and those who have been guilty of this carelessness have betrayed their posterity.”

### ORGANIZED CITIZENSHIP IS ESSENTIAL.

One thing is assured. If there is to be individual responsibility for individual acts on the part of the public officials, there must be an organized citizenship, one that can secure agreement previous to primaries and elections and then enforce continuous and unceasing responsibility afterwards. Without such organization it is little wonder that public officials, seeing that the people fail to follow their actions, come in time to look upon the machinery of government as their own private property.

With the body of the citizens organized in units of neighborhood, there will be the League of Appreciation and there will also be the League of Punishment when it is needed. With such organization it will be clearly seen that there is too much election in our politics. Ballots containing the names of a hundred or more candidates, each of whom, when elected, passes beyond direct control of the people, are a trav-

esty upon democracy. It is making the elective principle a weapon to be used destructively against the very thing it is supposed to advance, the power of the people.

When organized public opinion has control, through all-inclusive community organization, we may well forego so many elections of so many officials and let public opinion perform its real task, that of supervising and controlling the organs of government.

The great outstanding need in American politics to-day is the establishment of direct control by the people, which is only possible through direct contact between the individual citizen, associated with his neighbors, and his agents in public office. This is a matter of vital public interest. We have tried entrusting this public interest to the private interests of party organizations, whose sole legitimate function is to organize public opinion, and we have found that they have instead created a party opinion, against which the real public opinion must organize and fight.

It is time to recognize that the government itself, the sole representative of the public interest, must take full and complete responsibility for all proceedings in which the electors formulate and express their views of candidates and measures. Government cannot form men's

minds, but it can and should assure a fair chance to every citizen to make up his mind on all matters connected with government, in conjunction with his fellow-citizens and in the light of all the facts.

That means that it must be considered a matter of right that the adult citizens of any community in America shall use their own capitol, the public school building for all matters pertaining to the community welfare and the public good.

It means that the community secretary, chosen by these citizens in regular assembly shall be a public official, paid from public funds.

It means that political parties and candidates for public office shall forward their claims for consideration through these community organizations, where Republicans, Democrats, Socialists, and all the rest are considering the common welfare as citizens and neighbors.

It means that the vast expenditures of money in elections, which have shamed us as a people in the past, will be rendered useless. The *Wall Street Journal* points out that since 1860 the candidate with the largest campaign fund has won out, with the single exception of the contest of 1916. Four dollars out of every five expended in the elections have been for the ostensible purpose of organization of the voters.



The state, county and local headquarters, the political meetings with brass bands and red fire, the indexing and classifying of voters; these take the millions of campaign contributions. When the citizenship of America's fifty thousand neighborhoods are organized for discussion and deliberation, there is furnished the very organization which parties and candidates have been compelled to attempt in one-sided fashion. Then such expenditures on the part of private interests will be rendered useless and will be outlawed, a result which is the essence of common sense, since the people who raise slush funds to-day for their favorites, are not contributing; they are investing and they expect to receive thousandfold dividends in special favors at the expense of all the people.

It means, too, that public opinion will occupy its rightful place as the dominant force through complete and continuous information as to all affairs of government. There will be an official bulletin, issued through public agencies, by which to "feed the famished folks facts." This bulletin will give the summary of official action by agents of the people and will furnish the means through which the messages of parties and candidates can be taken direct to the people.

Such a program will require the expenditure of public funds, but it would be far more eco-



nomical for the taxpayers to pay directly the cost of political campaigns, even at the present immense scale of expenditure, than to pay it indirectly as they do to-day. The most expensive government in the world is that managed by the privileged few. Political "machines" always squander public money recklessly. The practice in efficient citizenship through community organization will be worth a thousand times more than it costs.

The additional taxation required from local and federal sources to pay compensation to the community secretaries and to establish the Official Bulletin, would be saved many times over through the elimination of present duplications. It is not a departure from the path we have found good in the past for we have already recognized political parties as legal entities and have sought to control them. This is but the next and final step in the process.

Not many years ago, it was the duty of the candidate, or the party, to print and distribute the ballots. This required a large number of agents, hired at great expense and opened the door to flagrant debauchery. It proved impossible for a new party or an independent candidate, without large financial resources, to enter the field at all.

Then the government stepped in and took

over the printing and distribution of the ballots, at public expense. The cost to the taxpayers in a national election, is many millions of dollars, but no believer in American ideals would advocate a return to conditions which prevailed prior to the adoption of the Australian ballot system.

Still, we have not reached the desired goal. Our journey in the pathway of democracy has led us back to the point from which we started. Like persons lost in the fog, we have walked in a circle.

In the preconvention campaign in the presidential election of 1920, we saw the dilemma which inevitably comes upon us through the present system. Either it is true that the candidate with the largest campaign fund to expend must be successful, or we must deny the sovereign right of the people to select their own candidates.

This situation is the logical and assured result of an unorganized citizenship. The remedy is to end the separation between society and politics, to annul the divorce between the community and government, through establishment of the people's head-and-heart quarters in the neighborhoods of America.

## THE PUBLIC REINVESTED WITH POWER.

Then the citizens will be reinvested with their power over the commonwealth. It will be no longer possible for a few men to take such control of party machinery that they may rob citizens of their convictions or drive men to act against the public welfare. Then men in public place will assume the responsibility attaching to their offices for their responsibility will be enforced by public control. Then men of ideas, conviction and character will make their appeal direct to the people and will be loyally supported, while the colorless, weak, easily managed men, who are always favorites of the party "machine" will be made unavailable. Then the object of the democracy, "the greatest happiness of the greatest number" will be accomplished by the surest method the mind of a man can conceive, the getting together of all the people so that their uncontrolled judgment may prevail.

This organization of the citizenship, with permanent headquarters in the public school house, opens the door for fulfillment of the possibilities of every tool of democracy. A few years ago the most widely heralded features in experimental politics were the Initiative, Referendum and Recall. Every believer in fundamental democracy gave these methods of

direct legislation his hearty support. Their purpose was to enable the people, over the heads of the lawmaking body, if necessary, to initiate good laws, reject bad laws or recall an unworthy public official.

However, in spite of the fact that many states have adopted the I. R. R. in response to a public demand, not to be thwarted, the results have not been all that were desired. This was not due to any defect of purpose, for these measures are resistlessly logical applications of the right of the people to rule. But actual operation shows that it is a difficult task to secure sufficient bona fide signatures of electors for action upon measures or elected officials.

In most of the states having these laws it requires from 8% to 10% of voters to sign the petition for the Initiative or Referendum and 25% of the voters to institute the operation of the Recall. It is of course necessary that there be sufficient names required to prove a genuine public interest.

Securing these signatures has been the *bête noir* of the enthusiasts for direct legislation. After the novelty has worn off, the task of securing the names necessary has been a difficult one where the public interest was alone to be served. Special interests were able to secure the names required by sending out paid agents,

who received a fixed sum for each signature. In some states, salesmen and agents of various kinds have given up their own vocations to become "signature-getters," a business which brings them a larger compensation.

Out of the experience of ten years, in many states, comes the vital fact that there must be primary organization of the people if these laws are to be productive of the results desired. With every community organized into a little democracy in the school house capitol, with a publicly paid secretary, acting under the direction of the citizenship, the last connecting link is placed in the chain of people's rule.

Then the Initiative, Referendum or Recall petition comes before the assembly as a part of the public business. Full and free discussion takes place and each proposal is debated. It is then the duty of the community secretary to receive the signatures of those who are convinced of the wisdom of the proposal. There is no charge connected with this service, yet it is done far more efficiently than through "professional signature-getters," and measures for the public welfare have the advantage over special privilege plots and plans.

This community organization will mean the fulfillment of the representative principle of government. Real representative government



never means giving to a set of agents complete control, with no power on the part of the principals to consider and review their acts. There is but one way to have representative government in America and that is for the people to have control of their representatives. Any business man who gave an irrevocable power of attorney to his agents every two or four years would soon see his business vanish and his property taken over bodily by his hired men. That is exactly what has happened in government. The servants have taken advantage of the complete lack of supervision and have grown accustomed to giving orders to their masters. They have foisted upon America the superstition that government is something above and apart from the citizen, a sovereign which can do as it likes with the life and property of the individual. They have made the political party a kind of military organization, with themselves as officers, the one duty of the rank and file being to obey their commands.

One of the most deadly blows ever struck at representative government in this country was the expulsion by the New York legislature of five regularly elected members, because of their political opinions. Unless the people can make any changes in government they desire through ballots, they are driven to attempt them through



bullets. Every sane American knows that such actions tend to Mexicanize the government. Yet, with such an incitement to violence and lawlessness, pending for many weeks in the law-making body of New York, there was no way for the people of New York to cry "Hold" to their power-embezzling agents. Former Supreme Justice Hughes and other eminent citizens did everything possible to prevent the dangerous act, but as individuals, however eminent, they were scorned. The fundamental principle of representative government was violated, law-makers became lawbreakers, but the whole people of New York, who were thus dishonored and betrayed, were unorganized, inarticulate, helpless.

It is time to return to true representative government with full recognition of the fact that representatives of the people in public office are servants, to be honored when they faithfully represent the people and to be dishonorably discharged from service when they prove traitors to the public will.

#### ORGANIZATION WILL BRING POWER TO PEOPLE.

The only method for the people to secure this power, an inherent right in a democracy, is citizenship-organization for effective action between elections as well as at elections. Then





FINDING THE ANSWER.

First rural schoolhouse postal station at Mount Joy, Adams County, Pennsylvania, established for direct shipment of farm products to the city community.

the people will not be forced to the timidity of the old farmer who entered the morgue in Kansas City and asked the man at the desk whether the body of the Honorable Jesse James was there. The attendant answered that he did not know any "Honorable" Jesse James but that the noted outlaw Jesse James had been killed the day before and his body was on a slab out in the morgue room. The old man walked out, pulled down the blanket and satisfied himself that it was really the notorious highwayman. He was walking out without a word when the attendant asked him why he had used the title "Honorable" in speaking of such a desperado. He explained, "That blankety blank outlaw held me up once but I wanted to be all-fired sure he was dead before I called him what I wanted to."

Will this organization of the people in community assemblies destroy the parties? No, it will destroy the "machine" with its grimy and slimy record of public betrayal, but it will give the parties their true place in a free government. It will make party leaders and public officials responsible because they are responsive and representative, because they reflect the definite formulation of the people's will.

The party will establish a laboratory for social research and will constitute a general

clearing house for accurate and scientific information. Its findings on every phase of its platform will be used to advance the party as the vehicle for accomplishing the ends desired by the people.

To-day there are numberless disorganized, separate investigations being made, with little correlation with law-making bodies, or the needs of the public. Let the party undertake the observing, recording and verifying of all data dealing with the problems and needs of America. Let the party assemble the experience of law-making bodies and administrative officials in this and other lands and place the facts before the people and their representatives. Let it organize a speaker's bureau for year-round service and publications which will stand the veracity test in neighborhood assemblies.

Such an organization of the party, running every day of the year, will furnish outlet for the energies of all who desire to serve the nation, while at the same time advancing the party interest. The old political headquarters, where politicians gather to arrange jobs for which the people will pay, will go, but in its place will be open headquarters in the capitols of the people, where men and women meet regularly to discuss political issues and social and economic questions and where one need not be ashamed to



speaking openly of party policies. Then the party platform must of necessity be more than "honey to catch flies" and it will be known before election that a victory for a certain party means the triumph of the ideas expressed in the party platform. Then the people will say and have power to enforce the saying, "Come to us before we go to you." Then the only straight ticket which any American will feel justified in voting will be the straight ticket with all the crooked names scratched off. Then the party advocate will not talk as if his candidate were an infallible, Omnipotent being, while the opposition candidate is a degraded, disreputable outcast. Then the intelligence of the community will instinctively revolt against bunk and the peanut politician will give way to efficient, trained men to perform the tasks of the people.

The successful political party of to-morrow must meet new conditions with new methods. It must have accurate information for the citizens who say, "I want to know." It must furnish real opportunities for service to high-minded men and women. It must make its appeal to the individual through his coöperation with his neighbors and it will need public confidence if it is to live, much less win victories.

There will be no backward steps. The right of the Womanhood of America to express her



will at the ballot box is an established fact. It means the promotion of political education in the better sense and means new ideals in politics. In spite of every attack by reactionaries upon the direct primary already established in partial form, we are going to have sensible presidential primaries, where candidates for President will be chosen by direct vote of the people, on the same day in every state of the Union. We are going to have a Corrupt Practices Act to limit campaign expenditures and prevent the plunderbund and the "machine" from carrying on their unholy alliance against the public good.

These reforms are assured. And if we are wise, we will realize now that their purpose will only be fulfilled by provision for the organization of the American citizenship for deliberation as well as decision. The new woman voters must be made members of the nation. For intelligent use of the ballot at primary and general election there must be the previous agreement which comes from mutual conference. To eliminate the necessity for huge campaign funds and to prevent special interests from financing campaigns, there must be organization of the people outside of party relations, where error is dangerless, because truth has a free field in which to combat it. Only thus may be accomplished what President Garfield said

was the political end most needed in America "Not how to avoid the existence of parties, but how to keep them within proper bounds." Then in the conflict of parties, the result will be the survival and success, not of the mightiest in money and "machine," but the survival of the fittest to serve America.

### COMMUNITY CAPITOLS DOOM POLITICAL EVILS.

Every evil in our present system of politics may be cured by all-inclusive community organization of the American people, which is true and consistent democracy. Visualize 50,000 communities, meeting in their neighborhood capitols. The one question before them all is, "What steps can we take right now for the good of our community, our city, our state and our nation?" Every selfish class proposal must meet the acid test of the public interest. Then the whole people will look at their problems with the direct interest which has prevailed among groups. In 1912, President Neil Bonner, of the National Retail Liquor Dealers Association, issued this appeal:

"Now, Gentlemen, watch out for your candidates for election. Get busy and learn how the men stand with you. Study those who want to go to Congress, senate and assembly. Put them on record. I want you liquor men to be liquor

men first and politicians afterwards. Forget that you are a Democrat, a Republican, or a Progressive. Select the men who will be fair and will represent you and not the political party.’’

This is the group consciousness of Bolshevism with a vengeance. No such appeal can be successful when Americans meet shoulder to shoulder in their community house as citizens and neighbors. With the people gathered for common counsel, such appeals will be taken at their real value and there will come a wrestling with concrete problems, out of which will come the quickening of American political life, so ardently desired by all patriots.

With such means for enforcing responsibility in their hands, the preventative power of public opinion becomes a fact. Then the authority of the people will not only go back of the ballot but beyond the ballot. The “wheels within wheels” system of parliamentary procedure, in Congress and legislature, which divides and diffuses responsibility, until it is impossible for the people to fix the blame for sins of omission and commission, will be forced to give way to a business-like procedure, out in the open. With the people’s organized gaze fixed squarely on law-making bodies, the checks and balances which now checkmate the people, must give way to

prompt action. Committee room doors will fly open for the sunshine of publicity to enter and records of legislators will be made where they can be weighed and considered by those whom they represent.

Such organization will mean efficiency in government. The great outcry for a budget system to coördinate governmental receipts and expenditures is a demand for a halfway measure, for it loses much of its value unless there is provided a method for efficient review by the public. Economy and efficiency in government will be iridescent dreams until the people who foot the bills have the controlling voice.

There are 39 separate governmental agencies to-day handling engineering and building functions, all of related kinds. There are 26 governmental agencies at Washington engaged in surveying and mapping. There are 16 agencies authorized to build roads. There are 16 separate bureaus doing work on rivers and the duplications are found everywhere in the National Government. If you were to shoot a fox in Alaska, you must make settlement with the Department of Agriculture, but if you trapped the same fox, the settlement would go through the Department of Commerce. Such ridiculous duplication means the useless expenditure of millions of dollars every year. The budget

system may mean that all these agencies will operate efficiently; what is needed is the elimination of most of them and the combination of their functions into one operating unit.

This fundamental reform will never be effected until the people, who now pay the expenses of government largely through direct taxation, are organized for effective action. Once they know the facts, they may be trusted to lop off the worse than useless excrescences of government, which have been bulking larger each year since the establishment of the government.

Public officials cannot do this work under present party systems and conditions. The people can. There are two kinds of intelligence; the trained, technical intelligence that is master of details and the intelligence that knows exactly what it desires but can only express broadly and generally the way to get it. The engineer in the cab represents the first; the passenger riding in the train to his desired destination represents the second.

The people as a whole may not possess the technical knowledge to work out every detail of legislation they desire and that task is meant for their hired men, trained for such duties. But the people do know that a vast number of boards and commissions, bureaus, and divisions



performing the same functions, means duplication, waste and extravagance. They will supplement the budget system with common sense organization, once they are in position to say with effect what they want.

Make no mistake. The people are safe and sane and honest and intelligent. Lincoln was eternally right when he said, "There is no better nor equal hope in the world. Most governments are based, primarily on the denial of equal rights. They said, 'some men are too ignorant and vicious to share in government.' 'Possibly so,' said we, 'and by your system you would always keep them ignorant and vicious. We purpose to give them a chance and we expect the weak to grow stronger, the ignorant wiser, and all better and happier together.' "

Acting together, the people will never deprive any person of just rights. With the right of full and free discussion they are worthier of confidence than any individuals, possessed of passing power. As Justice Charles E. Hughes well said, "The only thing you can depend on in this country is the judgment of the people, after full discussion." The wisest statesmanship today is to help the people organize for that full discussion and then trust them, the good and the bad, the wise and the ignorant, to solve American problems.



“COMPOSITE CITIZEN” CAN SOLVE ALL PROBLEMS.

Great questions are pressing for solution but not one of them is too big for the composite American citizen, who is wiser, more self-reliant, virile and capable than President or Congress or court. The problems of the League of Nations, government ownership, tariff, trusts, health protection, national education, taxation, army and navy, universal training, relations of capital and labor, immigration, conservation of resources, soldiers' compensation and all the others may best be solved by Americans gathered together for mutual counsel. They will make blunders, at times, but not so many as despotic officials and the best remedy for mistakes through passion, prejudice and fickleness is opportunity for free discussion by self-governing individuals in a self-governing community.

The nation should see to it that such opportunity for mutual counsel is enjoyed by every citizen as a matter of national security. The nation has a right to exist; it has a right to a vigorous, efficient existence. These rights mean that every American has a place in the brotherhood, that he has a right to membership in America, to feel a personal, vital interest in American progress and prosperity.

There is a great, undeveloped capacity for

self-government in America; there is a willingness in the average citizen to coöperate heartily in any effort which appeals to his intelligence as a direct means for the betterment of his community and nation. That capacity and that willingness may be developed and harnessed by entrusting every community with responsibility and power.

C. E. Grundish, in his little poem "Driftwood" shows what the qualities that made for heroic service "Over There" degenerate into "Over Here," amid neglect and doors to service closed and barred.

I am the city's driftwood—the scum.  
Look at me, hollow-eyed, sad-mouthed, melancholy,  
impulsive,  
Dreamer of crude dreams, wild of speech, reckless of  
life.  
I am the failure, the misfit, the fool.  
I am the haunter of parks, the curser of creeds, Des-  
tiny's jester.

I am the drifter.  
Yet, somewhere I have a Croix de Guerre, and my  
Buddie,  
Hollow-eyed, sad-mouthed, melancholy, impulsive, like  
myself,  
Sleeps in Flanders' Fields.

It is folly to fail to make use of the ability which now wastes its fragrance on the desert air, but it is more than that. It is dangerous to

dam up the channels of men's rightful activities in the conduct of government. The drawing apart into opposing groups of poor and rich, capitalist and worker, Catholic and Protestant and the jungle warfare which ensues, summons America to act or perish. The citizen-mass becomes a dangerous compound, ready to explode at a touch. The disinherited seize the torch and dynamite, and anarchy triumphs over orderly government.

Under all-inclusive community organization, the means is found to reconcile the members of the community and weaken these ties that bind men into minor groups, by opening the channels for universal participation in the greatest interest, the common welfare. It will create an environment of mutual understanding and good will between the races, classes and creeds that make up our common life. It will merge the class and clan spirit into the community spirit. It will cure the distrust of representatives by making public officials responsible and responsive. It will furnish a place where those who have grievances are invited to voice them before their neighbors so that they may meet the test of all-sided consideration. It will end the repression which is the seed of revolution. It will make citizens eager to join in one common effort to make real the bright promises of

the American form of government, to afford to every citizen an unfettered start and a fair chance in the race of life.

The community capitol furnishes the way out of the present political labyrinth. It is a factory of good citizenship. It is a furnace in which a score of nationalities is fused into one red-blooded, American citizenship. It is a power plant of patriotism. It is a quarry, wherein are wrought foundation stones for the Temple of the Republic. It is a fraternity to bind East and West and North and South together. It is the triumph of coördination and coöperation sought in five thousand years of warfare against tyranny and anarchy. It is a guarantee that free government shall not perish from the earth. It is a lighthouse of liberty. It is a guard around American institutions and American rights. It is the heart of America.

The community capitol accomplishes the goal toward which all rightful endeavor leads—understanding between man and man. It makes sure of more of the Golden Rule and less of the rule of gold. It makes possible the successful struggle of humanity against the oppression of plutocracy. It is the means by which all Americans may have equal rights, with special privileges to none. It makes possible the effective recognition that workers are more valuable than

workshops, miners mightier than mines, men holier than machines and people greater than possessions. It is a reconciliation, a reaffirmation, a restoration and a recovery of that democracy on which all our institutions are founded.

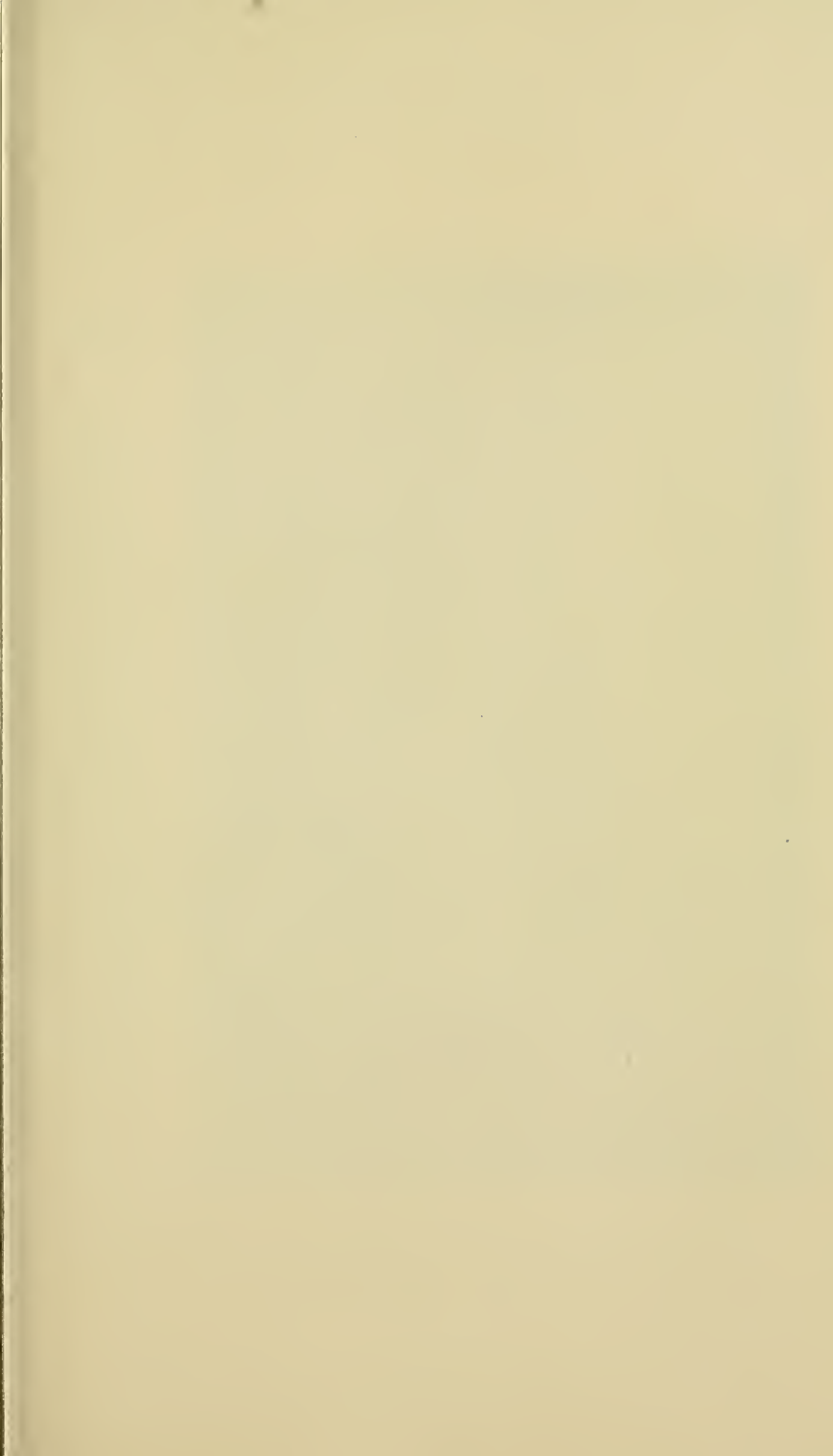
The community capitol makes real the religion of democracy, the religion of "peace on earth, good will to men." The voice of the people, no longer throttled and fettered by division, becomes indeed the voice of God. It gives all of us the right to make of our mistakes, ladders instead of millstones, as we work out through neighborly counsel and mutual help the steps by which America, torchbearer of the world, may follow that Progress, which is the "onward stride of Almighty God."

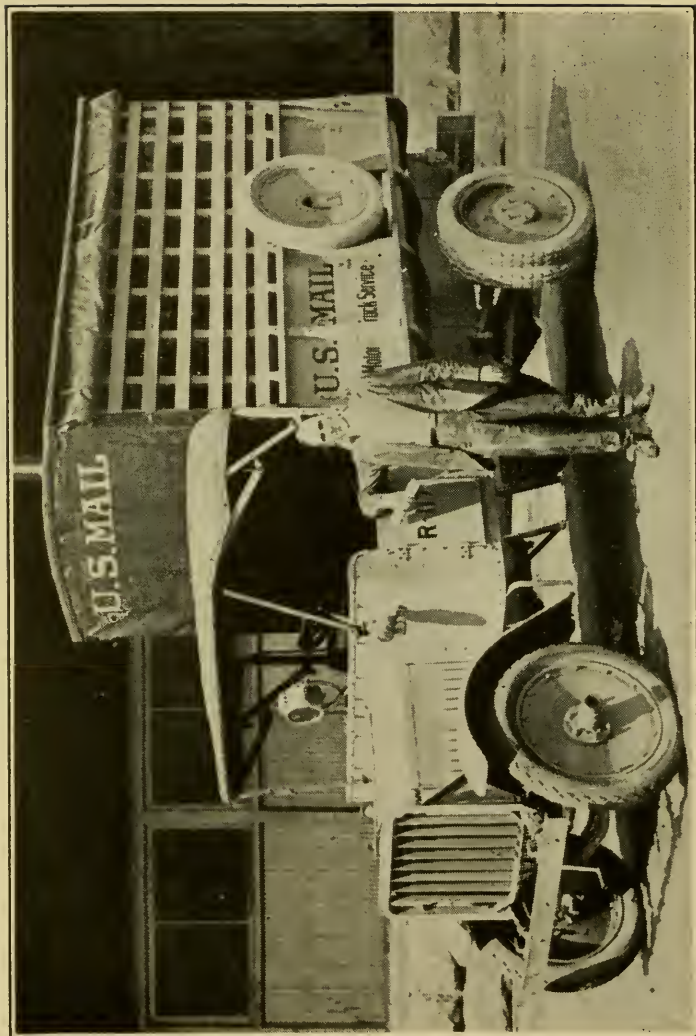
## Part III

# Food Products from Farm to Pantry









FROM PRODUCER TO CONSUMER.

The author and the first postal truck especially built for farm-to-table service.  
Affords Southern Maryland direct outlet to national capital.

### III.

## FOOD PRODUCTS FROM FARM TO PANTRY.

In a majority of American homes the high cost of living is still a tragedy. The prices of the necessities of life have been skyrocketed until they have become luxuries to many persons. During the Great War it was considered patriotic to accept the mounting costs of food with a smile and the remark, "It's the war. It will be all right afterwards." But afterwards is here. The boys are back but reasonable prices are not. Amidst disorganization of industry and deflation of credit, the consumer suffers extortion.

We speak about cold figures. The figures of the retail price lists of food supplies are flaming hot and gleam red in the eyes of every man to whom they mean privation and suffering for himself and those dependent on him. Wage-earners and persons with fixed incomes are crushed beneath this burden. To them the high cost of living is but another name for low wages. The amount of pay received is not half so important as the amount of things it will buy.

Though money income is increased, if it does not keep pace with the rising cost of living, real wages have been reduced.

That has been the situation. The Bureau of Labor Statistics shows that union wages were increased 39% from 1913 to 1919, while retail prices of food jumped 88% during the same period. That means that the man who received a dollar in wages in 1913 only received 69 cents in 1919. These figures are based on union wage-earners alone and do not cover unorganized labor nor persons receiving fixed salaries, who are always the greatest sufferers from such conditions. It is a startling fact and one full of menace, that with all the widely-heralded increases in wages, the average man in America received less in 1920 than he did in 1913.

Such a condition means danger. The logical result is a lower standard of living, less food, a poorer home, a drearier life. There is privation for the children, those upon whom the nation's future rests. They are being dwarfed in development at life's threshold, when abundant food is essential to healthy growth.

If such conditions continue, America will witness the sight of desperate men taking a rag for a banner and fighting under it with red rage in their hearts. Hunger knows no reason and no patriotism. If we will not face the facts from

the standpoint of justice and the common good, we will be compelled to face them from the standpoint of fear. We will reach the day of which it is written:

When the land is young no longer but grown old in  
chronic sins,  
When the strife of class with masses, both for bread  
and breath begins,  
When the poor shall swarm with riot and the magic  
cheeks of trade  
Stretch between the hungry workman and the work  
his hands have made,  
When the social vultures thicken and the strong the  
weak devour,  
When the corpses of the people strew the pathways up  
to power,  
When blind faction sends her foxes blazing through  
the standing corn,  
From the firebrands of the furies who shall save our  
land, forlorn?

What is the reason for this intolerable situation? Has the Almighty failed to provide for the sons and daughters of America? Has famine come upon us because our fields and valleys have failed to give forth their increase? Is there not food enough produced in America for the people of America?

Here and there are voices raising a hue and cry for more production and shouting that lack of output is the cause of all our woes. In almost every instance, they are distorters of the issue, having evil purposes to serve and vio-



lators of right to protect. Everyone admits that greater production is important but it is false to say that it will solve the problem. Far more important is the just distribution of the food now produced. Thomas A. Edison has said: "Selling cost is outrageously high. Production cost is often small beside it. Now, why not put more inventive genius to work upon the big problems of distribution?"

It is a timely query, for Edison himself and the other stellar lights of science have been efficiently engaged on the tasks of production and have perfected marvels of machinery which do the work of ten thousand men. They have made the iron in the mountains into myriad-wheeled engines of industry for the production of the necessities of life. They have taken products that formerly went to waste and have made of them valuable commodities for the use of men.

That work has been well done. With the tractor and self-binder and the labor-saving inventions which have revolutionized agricultural industry, there has come a tremendous increase in the production of food supplies.

Think of 940,987,000 bushels of wheat produced in 1919, when the average production for the years of 1913 to 1917 was 790,634,000. That means an increase of seven and a half bushels

for every family in America, during a time when the price of the loaf of bread was climbing steadily, every cent added meaning an addition of \$320,000,000 to the bread bill of the country.

Think of 2,917,450,000 bushels of corn produced in 1919, when the average production for the years 1913 to 1917 was less by 170,000,000 bushels. Think of an additional production of 10,000,000 bushels of rice; 35,000,000 bushels of sweet potatoes; 2,000,000 bushels of buckwheat and other crops exceeding the average production during the period when prices were going to unheard of heights.

Think of 23,747,000 milk cows in America on January 1, 1920, when there were 20,497,000 in 1913, the increase alone meaning that there was an additional milk cow for every seven families in the land. There was an increase of more than eight million other cattle during that period. There was an increase of twelve million swine.

#### DISTRIBUTION THE CAUSE OF HIGH COSTS.

We are producing more meat and other food supplies per capita to-day than we did twenty years ago. We produce more food but eat less. Production has been perfected while the more important problems of distribution have been neglected and the entire system of distribution

allowed to grow into one depending upon the erratic machinations of those whose sole aim is to exact profits for themselves, instead of the efficient handling of the nation's food supply. The cost of distribution makes up a large part of the price of food and we can't eat the distribution.

There is the heart of the problem. There is no physical reason for the intolerable high cost of living. It is due primarily to an infamous and indefensible system of distribution.

The investigation of the Federal Trade Commission into food prices shows clearly the insane system which now prevails. In its report issued June 30, 1919, the Commission shows that there is a vast number of dealers along the channels of distribution between producers and consumers, many of them serving no useful function. There are distributors, agents, country collectors, brokers, commission men, wholesalers, jobbers, retailers. Everywhere along the line are speculators, gambling on the prices of food.

To-day it takes from two to ten men to distribute the food supplies produced by one man. The number of distributors has been multiplying rapidly during recent years. In the decade 1870 to 1880, 3% of the population of the United States was engaged in distribution, or about one

person for every 31 individuals. In the decade 1900 to 1910, more than 6% of the entire population was engaged in distribution which means that there was a distributor for every fifteen persons. To-day, every three families in America support another family engaged in distributing the supplies necessary for existence.

The present system is highly organized for self-perpetuation. Former Governor Hanly, of Indiana, in describing conditions in Indianapolis, stated facts which apply to every city in America. He said:

“Garden products are produced within the immediate vicinity in quantities to supply the entire population, but the means of distribution are so entirely within the control of highly organized bodies that the consumer is compelled to pay a price for every garden product, even in the height of the season, far beyond the value of the product, or what he would have to pay could he deal directly with the producer, or even through a single middleman, such as the grocer.

“But grocers in the city are not permitted to purchase products direct from the producer. They are compelled to buy them from wholesale dealers and brokers. There is of course no law precluding the grocer from buying direct, but he is informed by the highly organized interests which control the supply in the main, that if he

does so, they will cease to sell to him. In many instances that would leave him much of the time with insufficient supplies to meet his trade, so rather than incur such a risk and enter upon a war with the wholesale interests of the city, he accepts the decree, pays the price and passes it on to the consumer."

This autocratic power is used to maintain the most wasteful and inefficient system it is possible to imagine. Food products are shipped across the continent from the point of production, and the district to which they are sent in turn ships out the same product, home grown, to distant points. For instance, white potatoes are grown in every state in the Union and are universally used. Arizona, the smallest producer in 1917, still produced 420,000 bushels, almost sufficient for the needs of the state. There are very few districts in America which do not now produce the potatoes needed to supply all the local needs. Still, the Bureau of Markets shows that in the year 1917, the latest for which figures are available, 17,891 carloads of potatoes were unloaded in New York City, some of them coming from California. Chicago received 9,537 carloads and they came from 41 different states. Minneapolis received only 971 carloads but they came from 29 different states.

The facts show that Minnesota sent 1,194 car-



loads of potatoes past Minneapolis to Chicago and sent 17 carloads to New York City, while sending only 428 carloads to its own market in Minneapolis. In other words, Minnesota could have supplied the people of the state with potatoes easily. Instead of doing that, her production went out to distant points while 28 other states were sending potatoes to Minnesota. Illinois was shipping potatoes to Minnesota, while Minnesota was sending other tubers into Illinois.

Then too, New York State shipped potatoes to Illinois while Illinois shipped her own home grown potatoes to New York. Maryland shipped 152 carloads to Chicago and only 60 carloads to New York. Potatoes grown within twenty miles of Washington made the long journey to Chicago, while those produced in Michigan were sent to the Capitol City.

#### SHIPPING SYSTEM CHAOTIC.

The map of distribution of all food supplies shows an utterly chaotic system, the shipping lines criss-crossing in haphazard fashion. Even the highly perishable product, strawberries, shows the same inefficient, reckless lack of system. One state sends her carloads out to distant markets while the very states to which they go, send back equal quantities.



New York State is the second greatest producer of apples in America. Still, 468,400 bushels of apples from the far distant State of Washington were unloaded in New York City in 1917. At the same time many New York apples were sent to western states. The New York Commissioner of Foods and Markets has officially stated that not only in the case of apples, but also as to peaches, pears, potatoes and other farm products, the farmers just outside New York City have been discriminated against and have been forced to seek their markets in the South and West.

It is no local situation; it is a nation-wide maladjustment. Pittsburgh receives white potatoes from 29 different states, sweet potatoes from 15, tomatoes from 20, cantaloupes from 25, apples from 23, peaches from 21 and strawberries from 17. At the same time, Pennsylvania sends great quantities of these products to distant markets. Denver people eat the potatoes from 15 different states, while Colorado ships 302 carloads to Chicago alone. Baltimore residents use the strawberries grown in 5 different states, while Maryland ships to Chicago and New York markets, 134 carloads of strawberries.

The cost of this woeful lack of system is appalling. The Interstate Commerce report for

1916 shows that, during that year, the fruit and vegetables carried by the railroads of the country, amounted to 41,392,796 tons, of which more than 23,000,000 tons were received from connecting carriers. Every cent of unnecessary freight rates on food products is paid by the consumer. With additional rates being levied by the railroad companies, the price naturally mounts higher, and an increasing sum is taken out of the pockets of the people through this insane system of distribution.

Nor is that all. The present system has led to a geographical specialization in prepared foods, which adds immensely to the costs. Peaches are produced in almost every state yet 99% of all the dried peaches and 91% of all the canned peaches used by Americans, are prepared in California and must be shipped from that far-western state to all other markets. Four states produce 60% of all the canned pears in America; seven states produce 80% of all the canned tomatoes; six states produce 80% of all the canned string beans; seven states produce 85% of all the canned corn; Maryland produces more canned corn than either Illinois or Iowa, in the great corn belt. Six states produce 90% of all the canned baked beans used in America; and Pennsylvania, with a compara-

tively small home grown production, sends out more canned beans than any other state.

When food supplies are sent great distances from the point of production, either for immediate use or for preparation through manufacturing process, there is certain to be great waste of the products. It is estimated that fifty per cent of the entire production of fruits and vegetables rot and waste on the farm and in the orchard because of present marketing conditions. That means that the consumer must pay for half of the product what the whole cost to produce, beside the profit to the producer and the numberless agents in between.

But aside from this waste of foodstuffs vitally needed by the people there are still others which are directly due to the system of shipping products out of one district to another, which in turn sends its products to other markets.

There are losses due to the use of containers for butter, eggs, fruit and other commodities which are too frail to withstand the numerous handlings necessary. There are great losses due to the products having been kept too long in the cars. One large dealer has estimated that there is a loss of from \$50,000,000 to \$100,000,000 every year on eggs, alone, because they are not marketed promptly and properly.

There is the loss due to the use of varying containers, certain producing districts having one style and size of package, while its faraway market has another style entirely. The goods must be repacked and regraded and the consumer foots the bill.

There are losses due to the decay of food products while waiting in the sun, rain or snow for transportation. There are losses due to improper loading in the cars. There are losses due to irregularity and delay in freight schedules on the railroad lines. There are losses due to rough and negligent handling by railroads and express companies and truckmen at terminal points. There are losses due to a multiplicity of terminal freight yards, cars of produce arriving at widely scattered points, while delay in locating them results in decay and damage. There are losses due to lack of facilities at freight terminals. There are losses due to the cartage of foods and the extra handling involved, each handling meaning bruised fruit, broken eggs, etc. Wholesale dealers estimate that cartage from the terminal points alone amounts to 1% of their gross sales. One New York wholesale dealer who handles only poultry and eggs, states that with a properly equipped terminal market he could save \$50,000 on cartage costs alone each year. In Washington the

loss on apples and peaches in cartage and extra handling is from 5% to 10% of the total value.

There is a great loss due to inadequate warehouse facilities. Hon. Joseph A. Conry, former Director of the Port of Boston, says:

“Millions of dollars worth of perishable food-stuffs are grown each year by the people of America and then permitted to go to waste because of the lack of proper storage facilities at reasonable rates. This loss touches every family in the land. The goods lost being removed from the market, the remaining articles of course take on an increase in value.”

Under present conditions, there are glutted markets in one place and a famine in another. No attempt is made to distribute products in scientific fashion. In one city, products decay and are hauled to the dump, while producers also allow their produce to rot on the farm. In another city, within easy shipping distance, extremely high prices, due to an inadequate supply, are charged to the consumer.

Of course, the consumer carries all these unnecessary costs and pays for all these wastes, although both consumer and producer are injured. Every unfair trade practice, down the long line of distribution, comes back in the end to the consumers' pocket. If the producer is cheated on one shipment, he must recoup his



losses on another, or go out of business. In the end, every false return, every dishonest deal, every waste and every loss, due to our complex, confused, costly machinery of distribution, is paid by the consumer. That is one of the evidences of interdependence between Americans which cannot be argued away.

THE I. W. W.—“INDUSTRIAL WASTERS OF THE WORLD.”

What is the total cost of all this in dollars and cents? It is difficult to estimate accurately but I have pointed out sufficient details to prove that we are the real I. W. W.'s—“Industrial Wasters of the World.”

The Osborne Committee of the New York legislature which in 1912 investigated New York food costs, stated that the cost of distribution was 46% of the gross retail price. This included all foods and the cost of perishables was shown to be much higher. Since 1912 the cost of distributing food has risen by leaps and bounds. There is often a spread of 500% between the price the producer receives and the price the consumer pays. An investigation into Washington food prices by the United States District Committee in 1919 proved that potatoes which brought \$1.50 to the farmer, cost the consumer \$4.50. Onions brought the pro-



ducer five cents a pound and cost the consumer twenty cents. Cans containing corn for which the farmer received  $3\frac{1}{2}$  cents each, when delivered to the consumer cost 40 cents each.

To-day, the cost of distribution of foodstuffs amounts to much more than 50% of the retail price. There cannot be the slightest question that our present system of food distribution adds five billions of dollars a year to the food bill of America, every dollar of this vast sum coming out of the consumers' pockets, without a single dollar of it going to the producer.

Is it not time to end this situation? Taxation of excess profits will not do it because it has been abundantly proved that the taxes are simply shifted to the consumer with an additional percentage of profit besides. Legislation is of no use save to free the channels and permit the natural flow of products direct from the producer to consumer.

But it must be done. Any country which permits its people to be offered a daily sacrifice before the altar of Moloch, cannot talk too boldly about lifting up other nations. It is well to remember that the dollar in an American's pocket is an evidence of liberty. It entitles its owner to a certain amount of merchandise, or leisure, or education. Whoever unjustly takes away a part of that dollar deprives the American of a





THE MOTOR TRUCK "OVER THERE."

Motorized "service of supply" carrying food to the front in the fight against the Hun. The same system will win the fight over here against hunger.

part of his liberty. There is no enemy of American liberty more powerful as an unjust toll-taker than the present system of distributing the nation's food supplies, with its countless complexities and advantages for parasites and profiteers.

Once more we come back to the fundamental trouble, the divisions which separate Americans and prevent their getting together for coöperation. The producers and consumers are unorganized and helpless. Organization and coöperation are the vital needs and with them Americans will serve themselves. It is the coupler that is needed to make a connecting link between those who produce the food and those who eat it; between the farm and the pantry.

We have the greatest distributing system in all the world in operation in America and it belongs to all the people. It is the United States postal service which calls every day at the door of every producer and every consumer in the land. When it was first established as a department of government, President Andrew Jackson declared that it would serve the same function for the country that the veins and arteries serve for the human body.

The postal service was organized for the purpose of carrying things, the very task which has become the crux of our food problem. The

food products have been produced, in the main, cheaply and efficiently, but when it comes to carrying them to the pantry of the consumer, we find immense wastes and great costs. There is no essential difference between the delivery of a book by mail and the delivery of a pound of butter or a bushel of potatoes. If we are to eliminate the distance and the barriers which separate buyer and seller to-day, we must do it through the American people's own agency, the postal service.

Still, this natural distributing agency, this public carrying system, cannot meet the public need, without organization of the citizenship. The parcels post system, inaugurated seven years ago, has run afoul of the difficulties of individualistic dealing and as a result, has proved disappointing.

The expense of securing individual shipments of food products from the farmer to the city dweller is almost prohibitive. A single dozen of eggs, shipped in separate container, costs at least ten cents. Then there is the inconvenience to the producer in handling many petty accounts, filling and shipping each individual container. There is also the difficulty of the city dweller getting in touch with the farmer who will take the trouble necessary for such indi-



vidual transactions, with persons he does not know personally.

These difficulties, which have prevented the success of the parcels post system, are removed by organization of the community. When there is a responsible association of consumers, acting through a community secretary, products are bought in wholesale quantities. Cases of eggs, crates of vegetables, tubs of butter and barrels of potatoes are bought instead of the smaller units. The parcels post charges, thus distributed, become an insignificant expense and the delivery is effected directly at a smaller cost than by any other system possible.

There must be organization, both in the city and country and only when this is done can we expect success in getting products of the farm direct to the table of the consumer.

Neighborhoods must be organized and the public school district is the unit of neighborhood. The public school building, in the center, belongs to all the people and every citizen shares with all the other citizens in the community of its ownership. These buildings stand ready to hand to be used as stations of collection and distribution in the great movement to bring producers and consumers together, through the agency of the postal service, operated for the public benefit.



## SOLUTION OF FOOD PROBLEM DEPENDS ON PUBLIC AGENCIES.

The public school and the postal service are public agencies, and this is essential for the success of coöperation in solving America's food problem. Private agencies cannot meet the concerted drive of highly organized interests, desperately struggling for excessive profits and willing to lose vast sums in order to strangle effective competition.

J. B. McIntyre, of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, former president of the Producers and Consumers' Exchange, of that city, has written a detailed account of his attempts to operate market produce cars on railroad lines traversing rich agricultural territory. His plan was perfect in theory, completely organized and meant a saving of 50% on many food articles. At first, he was entirely successful in linking up the producer and the consumer, with benefit to both. Then came the organized opposition of distributing interests. The farmers were offered higher prices. Agents were sent to buy all the goods offered at the cars. Boards of Health in the towns concerned were requested to stop alleged violations of the health laws. When these failed, the tremendous pressure on the railroad company itself was sufficient to stop the

service and the whole plan collapsed. Mr. McIntyre says:

“Indignation meetings were held. Committees of both producers and consumers waited on the officials of the railroad company, but no satisfaction was given and the service was ordered withdrawn.”

That is the fate of plans which depend on private agencies, even with such public service implications as railroad companies. But the school house is public property, owned by the community. The Post Office Department is public property, owned by the people. Once organized to use their own public facilities, the people may defy all the confederated cliques of exploiting interests.

That the school house and the postal service can be coördinated for lowering the cost of food-stuffs is not a theory; it is a proven fact.

In the city of Washington, the Park View School District community organized in their splendid school building. They elected their officers, the community secretary being John G. McGrath, who became the responsible agent of the community in all its activities. The people gathered in their community home for recreation and the discussion of vital questions. An enthusiastic fraternity of neighbors was established and the results have far exceeded the

expectations of those most active in the organization of the community.

One of the postal stations of the city post office, which had been located in a drug store, was discontinued because the druggist refused to continue the duties of postal agent. Immediately the community organization requested that the station be placed in the school building as the most convenient location for the people. This was done and the community secretary was named as postal agent and given the salary attached to the position. It was the first time in the history of the United States that this combination of facilities, the most natural imaginable, had ever been made.

The people gladly availed themselves of the postal facilities and the receipts on regular postal business tripled within a single year. Then came the question of using the parcels post facilities for securing food products directly from the producer. Individual orders were sent out to individual farmers, but all the difficulties of such dealing were at once in evidence.

Just at this time, Congress authorized an appropriation of \$300,000 for experimental motor truck routes in an effort to facilitate the collection and delivery of food products, direct from the producer to the consumer. Immediately

the Park View community took advantage of this new service and began ordering food products in wholesale quantities. Still, there remained difficulties in the way. It required the products of many farmers to meet the needs of the community and much inconvenience and delay were experienced in getting into contact with farmers who desired to sell their produce in this manner.

Finally, it was seen the organization of consumers is but half of the solution. The shipments at the farms must be organized also if permanent benefits were to be realized. However, the task was simplified because in the rural sections as well as in the city, the public school house stands ready as the center and headquarters of the community.

One of the new motor truck routes of the Post Office Department ran from Washington to Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. It traversed a rich farming country for ninety miles and no part of it paralleled a railroad line. In the past, countless tons of vegetables and fruit, raised in this territory, had been allowed to waste and rot, simply because there was no connection with a market which assured profitable returns.

The route passed through Mount Joy township, Adams county, Pennsylvania, which is situated on the edge of the famous Gettysburg

battlefield. There was organized the first rural postal station-community center in the United States. The farmers of the township, gathered in the Two Tavern school house, formed the Mount Joy Community Association. Calvin Rudisill, a former member of the state legislature was elected president and A. Nevin Sponseller, teacher in the Two Taverns school, was elected community secretary. This latter official, the key of the community organization, was elected by the people of the community and by virtue of that election was made a postal agent of the Post Office Department.

As teacher in the public schools, Mr. Sponseller received the magnificent sum of \$250 a year. As postal agent he was paid \$300 a year to start, thus doubling his income.

#### SCHOOLS CONNECT FARM AND CITY.

Thus the organized connection was made. The motor truck stopped each morning at the school house and also at the farms of large producers and collected the crates of butter, cases of eggs, bags of vegetables, boxes of poultry and other commodities. That same evening the products were delivered at the Park View school house in Washington and there distributed to the people of the community. The list of prices was sent each week by the Mount



Joy community secretary to the Park View community secretary. Orders were sent out and the goods shipped as desired. Payment was made by check weekly and the community secretary at Mount Joy kept records of shipments made by each farmer and made payment accordingly.

Thus the first direct communication between organized rural and urban communities through postal communication was effected between Washington and Mount Joy.

Around that little town of Gettysburg was fought the greatest battle on American soil. For three days the red gods of war took mighty toll of American blood and life. From that field, Secession reeled backward, facing certain overthrow. Sixty-six hundred men died there in fratricidal strife, brother slaying brother in a frenzy of wrath and hate.

Is it not peculiarly appropriate that there, within sight of Cemetery Ridge and the Peach Orchard and the Wheat Field and the Round Tops should be organized the first community center in the linking up process through which the public school and the postal service, community and communication, are made to work for a united, coördinated America? There, on the site of battle, where men went through blood and fire because of division and disunion,



began the movement for unity and coöperation. And the victory which is yet to be won for this genuine fellowship and fraternity of Americans will be more far-reaching and lasting than that which crowned the storm-swept crests of Gettysburg in those July days of sixty-three.

More money paid to the producer; less money paid by the consumer; that is the record made by these initial organizations in the movement which should be made nation-wide. There is scarcely a food product that has not been handled through this new direct dealing system.

In Washington the prices of oysters doubled in five years while at the same time the price paid the producer remained fixed. For the entire process of gathering and preparing these oysters, planting, shucking, etc., the oyster farmer received 75 cents a gallon. Then those oysters were sold to the people of Washington at 80 cents a quart.

The Park View community organization engaged to buy the entire output of Charles Connelly, of Britton Bay, at \$1.50 a gallon and he agreed to furnish the containers and pay the postage. The oysters were delivered to the postal station in the Park View school house, by postal motor truck and were delivered to the consumers at 40 cents a quart, which covered the entire cost of handling, wastage, etc. Of

course, no profit was included, the public machinery of school house and postal service alone being used.

The first order was for ten gallons of oysters each week. Within two months it was made 35 gallons and following that, the demand made necessary the shipment of 75 gallons each week, during the season. The producer, for the first time having an assured and profitable market, developed a first-class business. He experimented in the effort to produce a product of the highest class. He employed additional men at good wages. The old uncertainty of delivery, the loss of all the oysters gathered, if the boat failed to arrive, which meant the total loss of much-needed food supplies, have disappeared. And the oysters, gathered in the morning, are served on the tables in Washington homes the same evening.

The producer gets twice as much for his oysters as he ever received before and the consumer pays exactly half the price he was formerly compelled to pay. Is that not an object lesson teaching the mutual advantages of coöperation in the use of two great American institutions, the public school and the postal service?

Surely if oysters can be handled to such advantage, through this method of organized,

direct dealing, it follows that almost any other food product could be handled with even greater success.

The Federal Trade Commission classifies food products in the following subdivisions: Meat and meat products, fish and sea food, flour and grain products, groceries, fresh fruits and vegetables, butter, cheese, eggs and poultry, milk.

Articles in every one of these classes have been handled successfully in the Park View and other community centers. I have seen in a single shipment to Park View such commodities as poultry, oysters, fish, pork products, honey, canned goods, potatoes, apples, butter and eggs.

For Thanksgiving, 1918, the members of Park View community, purchased their turkeys at 32 cents a pound when they were selling in other markets at 50 cents and over. For Christmas a shipment of 140 turkeys was received from a rural community center. The producers received six cents a pound more than the prevailing price paid by commission men and the consumers saved 15 cents a pound on retail prices. Instances could be multiplied to prove the mutual benefits of this common-sense coöperation, but it must be evident to all that through such a system the wastes of the present distributing system of foodstuffs may be eliminated and the

resulting advantages given to the people themselves.

Only through such coupling up of community with communication can the present evil system of taking products out of one district, which needs them badly, and sending them to far-off markets, with all the wastes which follow, be remedied.

The only study, which has ever been made, to my knowledge, to determine by scientific methods, the land area needed to supply the food budget for a metropolitan center, is that completed by Benton Mackaye, for the Post Office Department. At my request, Mr. Mackaye, an expert investigator for the Department of Labor, was commissioned by Fourth Assistant Postmaster General James I. Blakeslee, to make such a study as applied to the city of Washington.

For six months he investigated the food producing districts within 75 miles of the Capitol City. His report is a revealing record of careful observation and logical conclusion. It has been of great value in other investigations.

### 13,600 ACRES NEEDED TO SUPPLY 2,500 PERSONS.

Under the budget worked out by the Bureau of Labor Statistics for Washington, a community of 2,500 population within the city, con-

sumes each week 49,000 pounds of foodstuffs and patronizes a weekly retail business of \$7,500. It is interesting to note that through several angles of approach, official investigators unite in declaring that a single, modernly equipped, food distributing business, can most efficiently serve a community of 2,500 people, which is precisely the size of the average city school district and of the consolidated rural school district in America.

On the basis of actual yield per acre, the cultivated land required to supply a community of 2,500 persons is 11,560 acres, which with an additional 15% for permanent woodland, would make a total of 13,600 acres. This area would be divided into 105 acres for potatoes, 885 acres for wheat, 380 acres for rye, barley, etc., 2,360 acres for corn, 1,390 acres for oats, 1,660 acres for hay, 2,560 acres for fruits and small vegetables and 2,220 acres for pasturage.

The working population of one agricultural community of 2,500 persons can utilize three times this area, or 40,800 acres. This extended area would support a group of efficient-size, food-producing factories, including one creamery, one flouring and grist mill and one abattoir. Thus a single agricultural community of 2,500 population would support itself, as to all staples,



and two other equal sized communities in the city.

The population of the District of Columbia is 455,000, which would make 182 communities of 2,500 persons each. They would require the product of 3,712,800 acres. The logical market district for Washington, the area within 75 miles, embraces 4,900,000 acres of farm land. Properly cultivated this area would provide the staple food products for the city of Washington and for the entire population within the tributary territory itself.

Now, ninety-one rural supply units, each consisting of 2,500 persons using 40,800 acres of land, would produce the food for Washington and for themselves as well. These units and the land are available. There is no doubt that the District of Columbia can easily be supplied with all staple food products from its adjacent market territory.

A survey of the United States shows an area of 475,000,000 acres of actual food producing territory, with a population of 105,000,000 people to be supplied. On the plan of production I have outlined, 452,000,000 acres would be needed, so that there is more than the area required. Taking the country as a whole, 79,000,000 of our people can be wholly supplied from local territory, while 26,000,000, located



entirely within the Atlantic States, would require an additional supply from outside sources. While the territory around certain eastern centers would not place them entirely on a self-supporting basis, it is the part of wisdom to develop such facilities as do exist, to the utmost possible degree.

This statement, too, takes into consideration only the present state of land cultivation. The agricultural land now unused in the eastern states, if brought to its possible productivity, would make this territory self-supporting. With its cultivation made profitable through giving the producer some of the benefits of reduced distributing costs, this land, instead of standing idle and worthless, would again be producing the food supplies needed by America.

From 1860 to 1910, New England's farm lands under cultivation decreased from 12,215,771 acres to 7,112,698, a loss of 42%. In 1840 there were four million sheep in New England and in 1910, only 430,672, a loss of 89%. The possibilities may be realized when it is known that if New England had as many sheep in proportion to area as the British Isles, this district would be raising fifteen million sheep to-day.

There are to-day 320,000,000 acres of food producing land in this country that lie idle, bringing forth nothing. That is almost enough

in itself to furnish adequate supplies for the present population of the United States and should be considered by those critics who insist that local territory will not supply the needs of our urban centers.

Here then is the answer to the present chaotic food distribution system, which sends food products criss-crossing the country, with the vast expense and needless waste involved in such a system. Use the food produced within the local district for supplying the needs of the district itself. Take advantage of the organization of the postal service, which goes to the door of every producer and every consumer. Organize the community so that food products may be shipped in wholesale quantities for retail distribution.

Let us take that humble but important article of food, the white potato. It occupies the second place, by weight, in the food budget of the average American family. It is grown in large quantities in every state and there are few steps between producer and consumer because its use involves no intervening manufacturing process.

The farmer who raises the potatoes must plant, attend and harvest his crop, besides taking all the risks of bad weather, insect pests, plant diseases, etc. It should be self-evident that the producer should receive many times

more for his skilled work and capital than the man who performs the menial task of carrying those potatoes from the farm to the pantry.

In 1919 the average price received by the producer of potatoes was \$1.26 a bushel. The average price paid by the consumer was \$2.24 a bushel. It cost 98 cents to deliver a bushel of potatoes from the producer to consumer. In 1920 the price of potatoes went to astounding heights in the early months and in June, the price of white potatoes was 606% higher than in June, 1913. All this in spite of the fact that the 1919 crop was up to the average and was 72 million bushels more than in 1916, when the price was much lower.

#### WHAT COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION CAN DO FOR THE ULTIMATE CONSUMER.

Through the use of the postal service plus community organization, potatoes can be shipped in large quantities at 35 cents a bushel from the farm of the producer to the kitchen of the consumer. That means a saving of 64% of the present cost of distribution. The producer could be given a still higher return and the price to the consumer would be less than the 1914 price level, taking into consideration the increase in wages since that time.

Such a program should appeal to every city

dweller who saw the white potato take the same classification as hothouse fruit, with a price of twenty cents a pound. Some one has said that even "the oldest inhabitant could not remember when he had to dig down so deep for potatoes."

There is no just reason for the high prices of potatoes, no reason at all except an insane distributing system. The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimated in August, 1919, that twelve bushels of potatoes is the minimum annual requirement for the average American family. The 21 million families in the United States would therefore use at least 252 million bushels of potatoes. The saving on distributing cost, based on figures for 1919, by use of community organization and postal service would amount to 160 millions of dollars.

The average price received by the producer of eggs in 1919 was 43 cents a dozen. The average retail price was 62½ cents a dozen. The entire expense in shipping one dozen eggs, through the postal service where case lots are handled, is less than 3 cents. The advantage of this service over any other method of distribution is shown also by investigation of the United States Department of Agriculture. A large number of packages of eggs were sent by parcels post and the same quantity by freight and

express. The breakage of eggs handled by the postal service was 1.3% while the use of the other methods resulted in a breakage of 8% of the eggs handled. Through this use of the parcels post and the community center the cost of distribution may be reduced 90%, surely a worth while consummation to every producer and consumer.

The producer of butter received during 1919 an average price of 50 cents a pound, while the consumer paid 68 cents. Where a quantity of butter can be shipped to the community center, the cost of delivery is less than 2 cents a pound, a saving of 92% of the distributing cost.

There is not an article on the food budget given by the Bureau of Labor Statistics which cannot be handled in this manner at the same tremendous saving in the cost of distribution. Even the distribution of a city's milk supply can be so handled. When milk was selling in New York City at 21 cents a quart, an investigation showed that the farmer-producers were receiving from 5 to 9 cents a quart.

Here was an advance of 200% on the producers' prices for the transportation, treatment and distribution of milk. A careful study of these costs showed that transportation, pasteurizing and all possible expenses together with a



liberal profit should not have been more than 5 cents a quart at the dairy.

Judging by such conditions, it is perfectly feasible for the community, using the postal organization, to transport milk from the farm to the community pasteurizing plant and from there to the individual consumer and save one-half of the present retail price. The production of milk could be increased, and more producers encouraged to enter the field by an added cent a quart and still the consumer would reap tremendous advantages.

Taking only the staple foodstuffs specified in the budget of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the sum of five billions of dollars could be lopped off the food bill of America by the common-sense process of the coöperation of the people in the use of the school house and the postal service.

Well indeed, did Mr. Mackaye, after scientific investigation into the conditions in the marketing territory adjacent to Washington, draw his conclusion:

“The community center, in the public school building, is the logical place and the practicable one, for handling local marketing. This can readily be done, and is being done, by placing the local postal station in the local school building. Our national postal system is thus linked



up with our nation-wide public school system. This is accomplished through the appointment of the community secretary as local postmaster. Thus equipped, the secretary is enabled to carry on several of the public utilities required by the community; he combines the functions of four institutions, the school, the town hall, the post office and the public market. This combination has already been put into successful operation in the city of Washington, in the Park View school building."

That conclusion fits in exactly with the statement of the Federal Trade Commission, after the most thorough investigation of the entire food problem ever made in this country. Its final report says:

"In every community where a considerable number of people live, there should be organized means of economizing foodstuffs. So intimately does the matter concern the public, both in the manner and the outcome of its establishment, that it should not be undertaken apart from the common effort and the common counsel of the public."

Collective dealing through community centers will solve the bread and butter problem in America. It will mean an enlarged parcels post service, equipped to handle, by one collec-

tion and delivery, almost the entire staple food needs of the nation.

There will be state headquarters and a clearing house service of information to producers and consumers which will reach every community. The community secretaries, acting as agents for the people, will have nothing to gain or lose on prices and will buy and sell as the community directs.

Community warehouses, slaughter houses, and cold storage houses, to prepare and preserve the food products grown in the adjacent territory, will end the vast wastes in transportation and the concentration of control of the people's food into a few hands and in a few districts. Cities will be supplied by the carload from the nearest point of production.

The present system is uncertainty, chaos, waste and tragically high prices. The new will be a common-sense system to prevent waste and to assure prices based on the actual supply and demand. The present system of distributing food supplies takes five billion dollars out of the people's pockets every year, and returns no benefit. One-fourth of a single year's excess cost of food would build a \$500,000 central community warehouse and storage house in every city in the country with a population of more than 5,000 and a \$40,000 building in every town with less

than 5,000 population. It would build, in addition, an adequate warehouse in every rural community of 2,500 people in all the land.

#### ABOLITION OF EVILS—NOT MERE RESISTANCE.

Resisting the evils of the present system of distribution is an endless task. The defects are fundamental in themselves and their results are shown in the Irishman's reply to the kind gentleman who saw him digging in a ditch and inquired the reason.

"Sure," responded the workman, "I'm down here diggin' to get some money to buy some food for me old wife to cook to make some muscle to do some more diggin' to get some more money to buy some more food to make some more muscle to do some more diggin', to get some more money to buy some more food to make some more muscle to do some more diggin'."

The energies which are used now in eliminating minor wastes and inefficiencies, if directed toward building on our time-tried institutions, will abolish the evils. With distribution of food organized through community coöperation, such evils as food gambling, packer monopoly, hoarding in private storage houses and unwarranted exports of foodstuffs will disappear.

Attempts to fix arbitrarily values by law must

ever prove futile. I insist that the law of supply and demand, with a proper system of distribution, unhindered by human selfishness and greed for gain, will fairly fix the price of every food product essential to the life of man.

The benefits to the producer through the elimination of excessive costs in distribution, will mean as much to America as the benefits to the consumer. One of the most fundamental issues in American life is the future of food production. If the social and economic life of the American farmer is endangered, the threat comes at last to every individual American.

Agriculture is the biggest and most important industry in America. It has 6,361,502 individual plants. It employs 14,500,000 persons. It has a capital of sixty billion dollars. Its annual production amounts to thirty billion dollars. Upon this basic industry and its progress and prosperity rest the very foundations of American life.

How is it with the American farmer? The Post Office Department sent a questionnaire to many thousands of farmers situated in all sections of the country. Replies were received from 40,000 and they voiced a practically unanimous dissatisfaction. The three points on which all the farmers agreed as being injurious to them were: lack of facilities for direct trad-

ing between the farmer and the ultimate consumer; big profits taken by middlemen on farm products; and scarcity of farm labor because of the movement citywards on the part of the young people reared on the farm.

These three points at least resolve themselves into one and that the one we have been discussing, defective distribution. The cure must be effected between the point where the farmer sells his product too low and the consumer buys it too high. Only when we face and solve the problem of food distribution can we eliminate the dangers which hang over the farmers of America and over every consumer as well.

Community coöperation plus direct communication will meet this need. It will remove those obstacles which prevent direct dealing between the producers of farm products and the consumers of farm products.

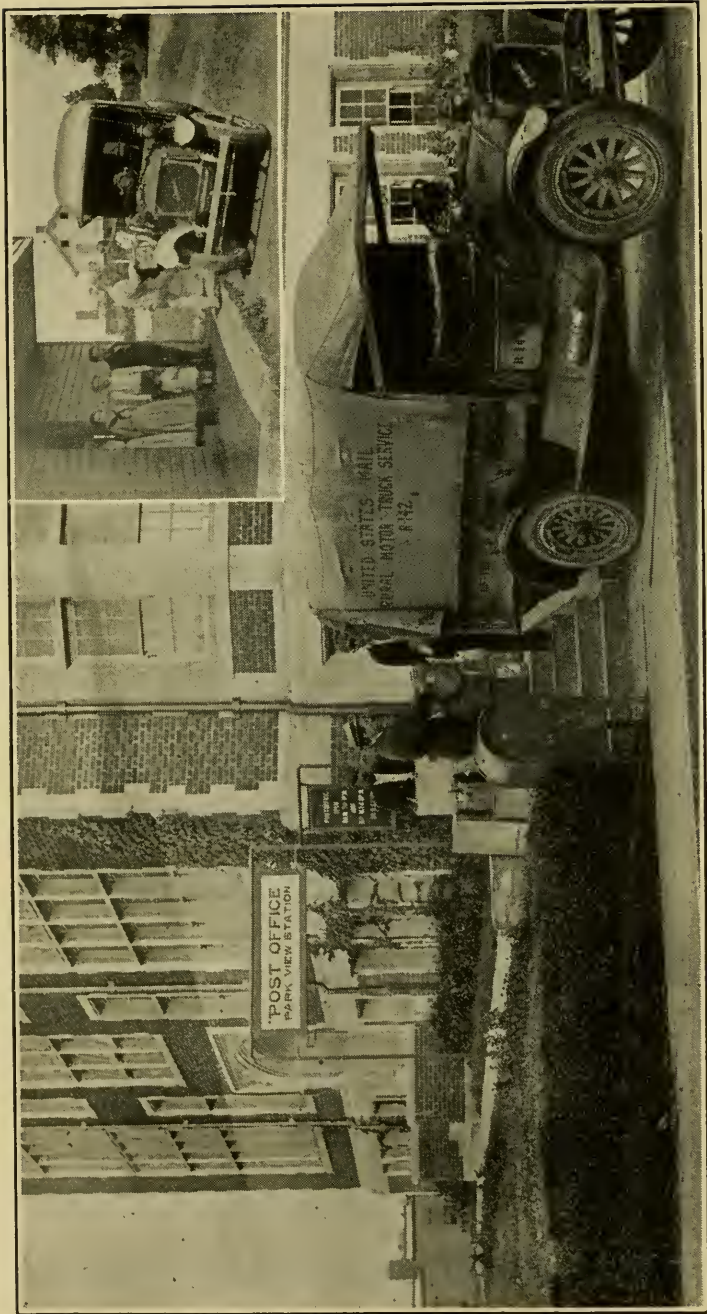
It will eliminate the undue profits taken by middlemen, which forms the second complaint of the farmers who gave their views as to the present situation.

The third point, lack of farm labor, is worthy of clear thinking. So long as young people find life more attractive and profitable in the city, they will go there and no power can force them to remain on the farm.

Why is it that life is more attractive in the







### THE TERMINI OF THE DAILY RUN.

Park View schoolhouse postal station, Washington, D. C. The first city distributing depot. The  
 (Insert) Country schoolhouse postal station, Mount Joy Township, Adams County, Pennsylvania. The  
 first rural collecting depot.

city? Why has Chicago increased half a million in population during the past ten years; Akron, Ohio, 201% and almost every other city in the land increased its population greatly, as shown by the 1920 census reports?

The editor of the *Nebraska Farmer*, who is also Governor of Nebraska, attempted to answer these questions in a series of articles, in which he gave the result of numerous communications and interviews with city men who were born and reared on the farm.

In every instance these men testified that lack of social opportunities for mingling with folks, or the hardships of a life devoted to producing goods whose prices were fixed by outside interests, led them to seek the city, in preference to remaining on the farm.

The community center furnishes a social and recreational headquarters, the lack of which has helped to rob the country of its young people. It provides the place for individual development through mutual counsel, where the most interesting problems in the world may be considered and decided on the basis of neighborly feeling instead of selfish and partisan interests.

Then through the uses of the public facilities for the direct distribution of their products, the community acting as a unit, the man who pro-

duces the food may receive the full value of his product.

Deeper still than that, this community coöperation furnishes the method for utilizing every advanced method of production which is too expensive for the individual farmer. Is there a scarcity of farm labor? Then the answer is the power machinery which saves labor.

In the cities power moves the wheels of every industry. Power lights the houses, hauls the vehicles on rivers, rails and street. Power cooks the food, lifts the elevators, carries the messages over the wires, contrives everything that is worn, from shoes to the button on the cap.

In the country, power in a single machine, can be made to plow 80 acres of land in a day. It can perform harvesting tasks impossible for an army of men working with their hands.

#### THE ANSWER TO THE PROBLEM.

This then is the answer to the problem: coöperation for the use of this power, limitless in its capabilities. The rural community, organized in its logical center in all-inclusive association, with its paid community secretary as agent, can perform collectively the tasks which none of its members can perform individually. It can own its tractors, its harvesters and threshers,

and by facing its tasks in the together-spirit can overcome its difficulties.

The Farmers' National Council has asked Congress to appropriate \$25,000,000 to be used as a revolving fund and loaned to individual farmers for the purchase of farm machinery. If such a plan were to be adopted it would mean duplication of the most unnecessary and inefficient kind. Such a sum for the purpose of making community loans through the use of community credit would be far better for it would be an incentive to the coöperation which America needs so greatly. The adoption of real community action, and the use of the postal service for distribution will prove a greater liberator than the invention of the steam engine or the self-binder. It will assure justice to the man who feeds the nation and it will mean increased food production, with resultant benefits to America and the world.

There is a farm population to-day of about forty millions of persons. We have seen that one community of 2,500 persons can raise the food for itself and two city communities of similar size. The present farm population can produce the food for this country and help to supply the world as well. But there must be concentration, coöperation and coördination among the farmers. No individual can compete single-



handed with the present conditions. The food producers of America must be encouraged to organize for the mutual purchase of implements, machinery and farm supplies and for the mutual sale of their products. That is to the interest of every man, woman and child in America.

Through coöperative action of the agricultural communities, the credit of all may be used for the benefit of each. Then will be abolished the evil of absentee landlordism and tenant farming. It is probable that 50% of the farmers of the United States to-day are tenant farmers. The tenant farmer must be made an owner and this may best be accomplished by local action. The community must realize that the average tenant does not have the same interest in the land, in the schools, in good roads as the farmer who owns his own home and attaches his family to the community. The tenant farmer competes on an unfair basis with the landowning farmer and he lowers the standard of living and creates a haphazard type of farm labor. As a policy of enlightened selfishness, the agricultural community will help meet this menace by helping to put back on the soil, the landowning, family-raising farmer.

Given this sense of membership in the community and in America, which comes through organization and coöperation and the drift from

farm to city will never reach the danger point. Then the expensive and foolish, so-called "educational" campaigns with their slogans, "Back to the Soil," "Stick to the Farm," will go where they belong, into innocuous desuetude. Their promoters in most instances have known of their futility and they have certainly had the doubts of the old colored lady who stood by the newly-made grave of her husband and mourned, "Poor Rastus, I hope he's gone where I knows he ain't." These city-made campaigns, based on utter misunderstanding, never did and never will add a single real farmer to America's producers.

So, too, all plans for soldier settlement such as are contemplated in the measures before Congress, are certain to fail unless marketing facilities are provided and a just distribution system established.

Make life on the farm livable; put the farmer on an equal plane with his city brother, assure him the right to know the power and happiness of neighborly coöperation, an income for his labor sufficient to buy the things that other men buy, the right to control his own product through the use of public distributing agencies, and ambitious, capable young men and women will "stick to the farm" and any others needed will "go back to the farm." An ounce of actual



benefit is worth a pound of moralizing from those who sit in the shade and shout "Go to it" to the farmer as he hoes potatoes.

Of course, one of the first results of this community development in the marketing of foodstuffs, through motor trucks of the postal service would be general recognition of the importance of permanent road construction.

There are 3,057 miles of canals, 12,000 miles of rivers, lakes and coastal waterways and 350,000 miles of railroad lines in America. But there are 2,200,000 miles of highways. In the postal service the collection and delivery of mail on rural routes cover 1,300,000 miles of these highways every day. These routes traverse every producing section in the country and go to the door of every producer.

Think of the situation. There are 60,000 star and rural route carriers in that postal service. Every one of them should be transporting a ton of foodstuffs every day. That would mean 120,000,000 pounds of food every day, enough to supply abundantly the entire city population of America.

With community action for direct dealing and adequate roads that tremendous accomplishment is possible. And the trunk lines necessary, crossing the continent from East to West and North to South, can be built and maintained

out of the receipts from foodstuffs shipped by postal motor trucks. Then, with the states maintaining connecting and feeding lines, the highways of America can be made to serve their real purpose and produce their intended benefits.

Former Assistant Postmaster General Blaklee, who devoted seven years to this problem, says that such a plan is entirely feasible. Not long ago he stated officially:

“The conveyance of mailable matter, including parcels post, at the regular postal rates, will cover the cost of transportation, expenses of administration, and also the construction, improvement and maintenance of the highways used for such purposes.”

It must be remembered that first class mail matter, which seems so inexpensive at two cents a letter, in reality means a freight rate of \$2,000 a ton. It is only necessary that fifteen pounds of first class mail be carried to pay all the expenses of operating a two-ton truck over a distance of one hundred miles.

#### EXPERIMENT PROVES POSSIBILITIES FOR PROFIT.

The Postmaster General's report for 1918 shows the result of the experiment of using motor trucks to carry foodstuffs as mail matter, direct from producer to consumer. It shows

that for the first six months of that year, the postal receipts on the eight routes established were \$204,198.39. The total expenses were \$41,110.08. The average net profit per route for this period was \$20,386. The average profit was 62 cents for every mile of road traversed. While some of the money received as postal revenue could not be credited to parcels post matter, the showing is clear that the actual returns on present rates, would fulfill the claim made by Mr. Blakslee and would form one of the most profitable departments of the American government.

The roads, thus constructed, would bind the nation together in a way to defy sectionalism. They would result in better schools for there is a direct relation between poor roads and poor schools. Good roads mean consolidated schools with better educational facilities at reduced cost. Here too could be found the answer to the problem of transporting pupils to the consolidated schools. The pupils would be carried to and from the school house in the post office motor trucks, which would also be collecting produce and delivering mail matter on alternate trips. Coupling up the post office and the public school has many ramifications, every one of them meaning an advancement of the common good.

All these profits will come from a service which now shows a great loss. To-day Congress appropriates some \$80,000,000 a year for the rural delivery and star route service of the Post Office Department. Even then, the carriers are underpaid and are required to furnish their own vehicles.

Ninety out of every hundred of these routes begin and end in villages which furnish no market for food. The reports show that there is an average collection of but six parcels post packages per route each day and a delivery of but one. There is a clear loss of \$50,000,000 every year on this service.

Is this not reckless extravagance and inexcusable folly? These routes should be motor truck routes, many times longer than at present. Those trucks, owned by the government, should be loaded every day with food supplies, direct from the grower to the consumer.

The experiments made have proved that this can be done on many routes. With proper roads it can be done on all. Wherever there was community coöperation plus this means of communication there was the kind of success which was voiced by Virginia farmers in a letter to their United States senators, when it was proposed to discontinue the appropriation for

the motor truck service. In their petition they said:

“We have the richest section of Virginia, but without transportation facilities. These postal motor trucks have been the means of opening up new markets for our people and we have been brought together as never before. We appeal to you from our hearts to help us now, by restoring this appropriation.”

It has already been proven that this plan meets every demand of a common-sense system of distribution. It means a 20% saving to consumers and the transportation of food to the consumer more quickly and in a better condition. It means 10% more to the producer, a market outlet for food supplies hitherto unavailable, maintaining of men and horses on the farm, instead of spending time in marketing, encouragement of diversity in farming as a result of widening the market area, and many other benefits to the producer of food.

It means an income to the United States government from this profitable movement of food supplies over the roads of America, which can be used for road improvement and other public welfare plans.

It is time to extend this service on a nationwide scale and to use the benefits of neighborly coöperation. Fifty thousand trucks which lie



useless in the hands of the War Department should be on the roads to win the greater fight than that against the Hun—the fight against hunger.

The gross weight of all farm products is estimated at 400,000,000 tons. The weight of food may be placed at 300,000,000 tons, transported from the farm.

To-day the motor trucks of the United States are carrying 1,200,000,000 tons over American highways. It is not visionary to say that the Post Office Department, the greatest distributing agency in the world, could carry a quarter of the tonnage now carried by privately owned motor trucks. And of course it would not be necessary to carry all the food supplies to affect a change, for the transportation of any considerable part of the entire tonnage of food products through the use of the postal service would revolutionize the present system of food distribution.

The plan involved is simply a peace time modification of the service of supply which made possible the victory of civilization over Prussianism. The food for the armies of America in France was carried in fleets of motor trucks under the Motor Transport Service. From base supply ports, to advanced supply depots and thence to the front lines the food for



the fighting men was conveyed in motor trucks over the highways, under the control of America, organized for effective action.

The same ability and genius which organized and maintained the service of supply in France will suffice to organize this new and equally important service of the American people. Its adoption will be the answer to the S. O. S. which comes from an anarchic system of food distribution, with its menace of privation to every American citizen.

It is a new plan in that it is a new application of time tried institutions but it fulfills completely the requirements of an old sage who declared that "the purpose of all legislation is to make more effective use of the institutions from which the people are accustomed to derive benefit." The people are accustomed to derive benefit from their public schools and their postal service; why not make them more useful by coördinating them for the great task of feeding America?

There is opposition from the constitutional standpatters who, if they had been present on the morn of creation would have besought the Creator to allow things to remain in the status quo.

There is opposition to this plan from food-hoarders, monopolizers, speculators and para-

site distributors, who love dollars more than country and would take profit from the suffering of their fellows.

These pirates of business ply their arts in high places, in utter defiance of a disorganized people. When the armistice was signed on November 11th, the War Department had supplies of food for an army of five million men. It had commandeered 40% of all the food supplies of the United States and had it on hand ready for delivery.

#### THE STORY OF THE "ARMY FOOD SALE."

At the end of June, 1919, there were fewer than one million men in the military establishment. Still the War Department held to the food supplies, refusing to dispose of them to the people who had subscribed for the Liberty Bonds which made their purchase possible. The Director of Sales, in the War Department, officially stated that it was his policy to dispose of these products so as to "disturb industrial conditions in the country as little as possible."

In the meantime the prices of food, which had gone sky high during the war soared 8% higher than the level on armistice day. The people were at bay before the high cost of living while great store houses in many parts of the country were bursting with the food they needed.

What was the reason for this inexcusable policy? The American Canner's Association. The official record shows that this organization objected so strenuously to placing on the market the canned foods which had been prepared for overseas use, that the War Department assured the president of the association that he and his associates might relieve their minds on the subject. Twenty-two million pounds of cured meats were sent from this country to Europe, in spite of the fact that we had great storehouses in France filled with food supplies and which were afterwards sold at a mere fraction of their cost.

Finally Congress took action. A resolution directing the War Department to dispose of these food supplies direct to the people through the use of the parcels post service, was passed by a large vote. It was planned to have coöperation between the War Department and the Post Office Department, so that the 50,000 postmasters of the United States might group the orders of their patrons and send them direct to army warehouses.

From the very beginning there was lack of coöperation on the part of the War Department. Officials could not or would not understand the plan. Then Secretary of War Baker sent a letter to the Post Office Department stating that the surplus food allotted to the three states of

Connecticut, New York and New Jersey, for distribution through the postal service had been turned over to the Governors of the states.

Every postmaster in these three states had received detailed instructions as to taking orders for parcels post delivery and the daily newspapers had placed the plan before the public. The result was chaos and confusion. The postmaster at Hackensack, New Jersey, wired that he had taken cash orders to the amount of \$12,000 and must return the money to each individual, unless the plan was carried out as originally intended.

Nothing was done, however, and these three states were arbitrarily removed from the distribution as specified in the resolution of Congress.

When the price lists were finally prepared for distribution to the postmasters in the other states, they were found to be full of errors, in spite of the fact that the Director of Sales was receiving a salary of \$25,000 a year, presumably for "efficiency." The prices, weights, quantity per case and amounts allotted, were jumbled to an amazing degree. But in spite of all handicaps, the sale of these food supplies was started on August 19, 1919, three weeks after the resolution had passed Congress.

Although the prices were not as low as they

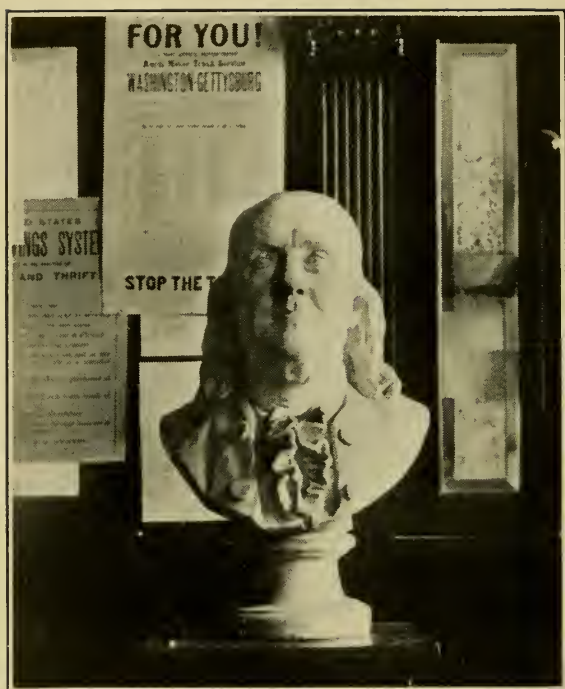
should have been, they made a saving possible and the people stormed the doors of the post offices of the land. In the first three days the Philadelphia post office took in 8,016 separate orders and \$100,570 cash in advance. Ten cities reported sales amounting to over half a million dollars, the orders coming direct from the consumers.

Taking the orders and the cash and sending them to the army warehouses was but one part of the transaction. The War Department must see that the goods were shipped to the postmasters so that they could distribute them to the individuals. The War Department fell down with a crash. The officers in charge apparently did not desire the goods delivered direct to the consumers. One of the high officials of the Post Office Department wrote that the very goods which had been bought and paid for by postal patrons had been delivered to one of the large department stores in Philadelphia and sold at a profit. The same story came from almost every city in the country. The people waited in vain for the food for which they had paid in advance, while mercantile establishments could get all they desired, on easy terms.

After months of waiting in some cases, the money was returned to postal patrons who had not received their supplies. In the meantime







THE FIRST EDUCATOR-POSTMASTER.  
Bust of Benjamin Franklin in Park View  
School, the first schoolhouse-post office.

the prices were cut to wholesale and retail stores so that they could sell at a profit, at lower prices than had been quoted through the postal service.

Still, the food was not disposed of in a way to affect the high cost of living and the prices of the very food supplies held by the War Department increased with every month. On July 17, 1920, more than a year and a half after the armistice, the Director of Sales sent out a blanket notice stating that \$25,000,000 worth of canned meats would be sold to dealers of the United States, which meant the pyramiding of profits and added costs to the consumers.

The Canners Association and other interests bent on exploiting the people had won. In conjunction with the War Department they had viewed the whole tragic question much as did the old Grand Duke Sergius, uncle of the last Czar of Russia. When he was told that the Russian government existed for the sake of its people, he scornfully replied, "You might as well say that the dog exists for the sake of its fleas."

The United States has been termed a "robber's roost," by Senator Capper, of Kansas. Such a situation as I have described shows that their "roost" in the greatest departments of government is as high as their prices. But here

is the method which will destroy their "roost" while it brings down their prices.

Its fundamental is organization of the American people as citizens and as neighbors, to act for the common welfare, after full knowledge of all the facts. With such organization, no agency of government, whose only reason for existence is to serve the public, will dare to betray the common good in order to serve special interests.

Here is the method to make America make good, to assure a government by the people and for the people. It is also a short cut between producer and consumer, more essential to American well-being than the short cut at the Panama Canal, which was put through in spite of all the inertia of government and the stupid antipathy to a new idea. The real difference between civilization and barbarism is that civilized people aim to work together for the common cause while barbarians desire to work as individuals, tribes and clans, resulting in constant warfare among themselves. The original meaning of the word "heathen" was "a dweller in the heath, away from the paths of trade," while "citizen" meant "one who lived in a center with direct intercourse with other places." Shall we not meet the food problem of America as civilized people rather than barbarians and heathen?

IN food is the future of freedom and peace and contented citizenship. Let us end the anarchy which has prevailed in the distribution of food by substituting coöperation through the powerful forces of community and communication. Thus the prosaic but supremely important bread-and-butter question, which makes necessary the organization of producers and consumers and the establishment of direct dealing between them, through public agencies, may well be the impelling power which will drive us to true democracy, safe for us and for the world, a democracy that means not only universal liberty, but universal organization, assuring equal opportunity and equal justice to all.



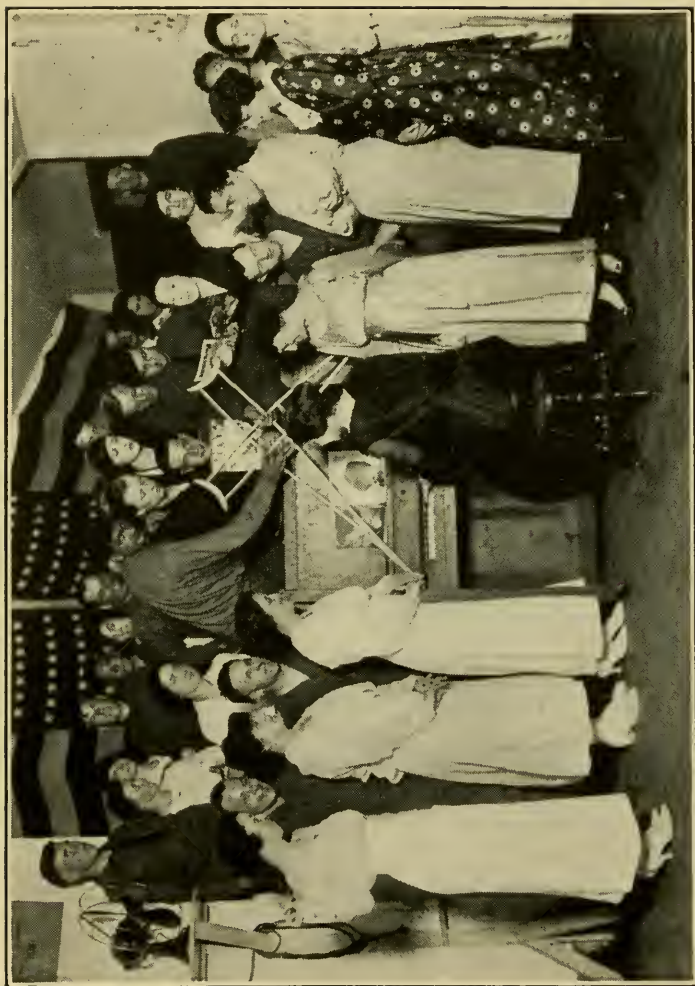
## Part IV

# People's Banks and People's Homes









FINDING THE "MERRY" IN AMERICA.

Soldiers and war workers in community center, Washington, D. C.

## IV.

### PEOPLE'S BANKS AND PEOPLE'S HOMES.

America is short a million dwellings necessary to give shelter to American families. Sixty per cent. of Americans live in rented houses and tenantry is increasing each year. These facts point out one of the most important problems before the nation to-day.

The responsibility for the situation rests to a considerable degree upon war measures. Building operations were deliberately suppressed during 1917 and 1918 through special permit requirements of the War Industries Board, and when the armistice was signed building was at a standstill.

Since the war, although the transportation of building materials has been made difficult by priority orders on coal, the main obstacle has come through the impossibility of securing money and credit at fair terms for home building operations.

In 1919 there were erected about 150,000 houses and separate apartments for the use of as many families.

In 1920 it is estimated that fewer than 75,000 houses and separate apartments were constructed.

The situation is growing worse instead of better and the existing shortage grows with each passing month.

To-day we are a million houses behind the need, or in other words there is needed at once home construction to the extent of four billion dollars, in order to afford shelter for the families of America. And each additional year brings a demand for 500,000 new dwellings or two billion dollars worth of construction. This housing shortage carries many evils in its train. The *New York Times* says:

“The burden of the housing shortage falls mainly upon the poor, already sorely prest by the cost of food and clothing. The result is registered in the *Weekly Bulletin* by the Health Department. There has been a sharp increase in infant mortality from ‘respiratory and contagious diseases’ which are caused mainly by ‘close and indiscriminate contact.’ The department attributes the increase to ‘the present housing situation which has necessitated the doubling up of families,’ making it impossible properly to isolate contagion.”

The house shortage is but half the problem. The other half is that America is becoming a

nation of tenants, a condition which has meant deadly danger to nations since the dawn of civilization.

The Special Bulletin on the Ownership of Houses, issued by the Bureau of the Census in 1910 gives the official figures in the situation to that date.

It is shown there that of all the homes in America in 1910, 45.8% were occupied by the owner, although there is included both those owned free and those encumbered with mortgages, 54.2% were rented. This is a decrease in the number of home owners for in 1890, 47.8% of American homes were occupied by owners and in 1900 46.1% were occupied by owners.

The situation is shown more serious still by the consideration of other than farm homes. Of these only 38.4% are owned and 61.6% are rented. In the most populous sections of the country less than one-third of the people own their own homes. In New York City in 1910 more than 88 out of every 100 families lived in rented quarters. In Pittsburgh, only 28% of the people lived in their own homes. In Philadelphia, less than 27%. In St. Louis more than 75% of the people lived in rented quarters. In Boston, almost 83% of the homes were rented, and in Washington, D. C., three-fourths of the people lived in rented places.



There can be little doubt that the percentage of tenantry has increased during the past ten years, but the official figures will not be available for some months. Taking the same percentage as in 1910 would indicate that approximately 58,000,000 Americans are living to-day in rented homes. Of the 16 million homes in America other than farm homes, 10 million are rented and 6 millions are occupied by the owners.

It is fundamental that a country of majority rule must be a country of majority home-ownership. The home-owner has roots in the soil of America. He has a spot of earth on which to live, labor and love. He worships as he builds. He does not fear the dread command, "Move on." His home is his treasure and there is his heart also. He turns waste into wealth. He sticks to the essential thing in spite of all interruptions and irritations. His soul develops and his character broadens as he builds for himself and family. His stake in the land is a pledge of fealty to the nation. Toiling for his hearth and home he helps build strong and deep the foundations of the commonwealth. He is a champion of the fireside, his own and every other in the land. He is a true member of the community and realizes the solidarity of interest and obligation upon which the hope of

America rests. Though his name never be heard beyond his immediate neighborhood, he is a successful American to-day and his children, raised, trained and educated in security and stability, are equipped to help make the America which is to be.

England has faced the housing situation that confronts us and has sought to meet it by giving a bounty of \$300 a room for every house erected for residence purposes. This is a frank subsidy to the builder and the British plan contemplates a government expense of a \$100,000,000 every year for sixty years. The taxpayers will foot the bill.

The theory of this legislation is philanthropic and it is having the one possible result, pauperization of the people, more tenants and fewer home-owners. America is better able to spend \$100,000,000 a year for the erection of dwellings than England and such action would be advisable if it were the only way or the best way.

But we do not need to subsidize either tenants or landlords. We can do something by punishing the rent profiteers, who corner the primary necessity, shelter, and force the people to pay their demands or stay out in the cold. Yet the rent legislation will not build houses and as long as the present shortage exists there will be profiteer landlords. Put one in jail and another

takes his place. The one sure cure is to increase the supply of houses and at the same time give every worthy American a chance to escape the clutches of any and all profiteering landlords in the haven of a home of his own. Government agencies can perform no greater public service now than to encourage the building of homes, not as a measure of charity, but of justice. The Federal Government need not go into the house building business, if it will help American citizens buy and build homes for themselves.

#### HOME BUILDERS NEED MONEY AND CREDIT.

The shortage of houses is not due to the high building costs. Building materials have not increased as much as the general increase of all commodities. Materials have advanced 110% and labor 40%. The one great difficulty is the lack of money to finance building. The official journal of the Real Estate League of New Jersey in a recent issue said: "The present situation is not due to the lack of desire to buy, but rather the inability to finance buyers. Out of every ten desiring to buy only one can buy on account of this condition."

That means that money and credit must be made available to those whose financial resources are not sufficient to buy a home for cash.

This is the one way. How then should this capital and credit be secured and made available?

The commercial banks cannot meet the need. Loans for home building can scarcely be secured at all from banks and then only on real estate mortgages at high rates. But the average tenant has no building lot or real estate. Even if he has, there is the high rate of interest and the commission for securing a first trust of 5% to be paid with each renewal. These charges make it an impossible task for those who need homes most, to secure the funds necessary through the banks.

The building and loan associations have done a great work in this direction but they have reached the limit. The demand on their funds has been so great that in almost every instance they have been compelled to stop loaning funds for new homes.

The Farm Loan Board is just what its name indicates, an organization exclusively for farmers. It cannot loan money to any person who does not already possess real estate and thus cannot help tenants to become home-owners. It does enable the farmer to borrow money on his land at one-half the interest that a city dweller is obliged to pay for a loan with which to build a home. What is needed is a people's

bank, where the savings of the people may be used for building homes at fair interest charges. The need is for a building and loan association of all the people, connecting the local community and the National Government. The need is for a Home Loan Board which will help the city dweller and country resident alike in building a home.

The nucleus of this organization lies ready to hand. It is the postal savings bank, a part of the nation-wide postal service which touches every community and serves every individual in America.

The Postal Savings System came into existence in this country on January 23, 1911, after an agitation of more than forty years. In the original measure no person could deposit more than \$100 in one month nor have more than \$500 on deposit. The rate was fixed at 2%, the lowest in the world, and was paid only in yearly periods.

In 1916 the limit of deposit was raised to \$1,000 and in 1918 to \$2,500, which remains the sum which any individual may have on deposit at interest.

The restrictions and limitations placed on depositors have had the result of making this system merely an immigrant bank. Those who come here from other lands know the govern-



ment savings system as operated through their postal systems and they are willing to trust their money to Uncle Sam, at a low rate of interest, where they would not trust the banks.

It is estimated that 60% of the depositors in postal savings banks are foreign born and they own three-fourths of all the deposits. The large industrial cities have practically all the deposits; 76 of these cities have two-thirds of the entire amount.

In the face of all the limitations, the system has grown rapidly and the report for the year 1919 shows 565,509 depositors with deposits of \$167,323,260, or \$295.88 for each depositor.

These savings of the people, under the present law, are taken in by Uncle Sam and immediately turned over to the banks, which pay  $2\frac{1}{2}\%$  interest. In 1919 the sum in banks, national, state, private and trust companies, was \$135,732,031. The balance was held as cash reserve and invested in liberty and postal savings bonds.

This is the situation. The government pays the depositor 2% on his savings, at yearly interest periods only, and then places the money in the banks at  $2\frac{1}{2}\%$  interest. Then the government borrows the money back from the banks on treasury certificates and pays 6% interest. Such an insane system would not be tolerated by any private concern for a moment.



Still, in spite of this procedure, the postal savings system, judged by itself alone, is a most profitable venture, although it is true that the profits are mainly taken out of the pockets of the depositors.

In 1919 the interest received by the government from all sources on these deposits was \$4,319,516. The interest paid to depositors and the amount paid out to cover losses from burglary, fire and all other causes was \$2,297,441. That left a gross profit of \$2,022,075. The total cost of operation, including every direct and indirect expense, was \$405,987, or in other words, these savings were mobilized at a cost of one-fourth per cent. The net profit to the government in the conduct of the Postal Savings System for 1919 was \$1,616,087.

This is rather a tidy sum but it is insignificant compared to the profits made by the 5,211 banks which held the deposits. While the government was making that profit, the 5,211 banks which held the money were making \$4,725,000. In fact, there was a clear profit of six million dollars on the business of the Postal Savings System in a single year.

This people's savings bank should not be run for profit but for the service of the people who own it. No possible service could be greater at this time than to permit the use of these sav-

ings of the people for building and buying homes for the people.

We should immediately remove the restrictions upon deposits of money in the postal savings banks. Then the interest should be fixed at 4% with quarterly interest periods. The result would be an outpouring of the people's money into this reservoir owned by themselves to be operated solely for the public welfare. All the existing banks in the United States have gathered in only half the actual money in the country. That which remains outside will furnish the basis for a great credit structure.

If we had the number of depositors in our Postal Savings System that France has, we would have a fund of \$1,947,407,690. If we had the number of depositors that Italy has, the fund would be \$1,905,670,390. If we had the depositors of the Postal Savings Systems of the United Kingdom, the amount would be \$4,350,311,195. If we had the same proportion of depositors to population that prevail in New Zealand, with the same average deposit they have, the fund would amount to more than ten billion dollars.

#### POSTAL SAVINGS WILL SOLVE THIS PROBLEM.

We need four billion dollars to finance the building of the homes needed for the shelter of

America. Take the restrictions off the Postal Savings System and hold out the incentive of home-ownership and the sum will be available within the year.

There must be established the method of making loans to worthy Americans who desire to own their own homes. This can best be done through a federal board, composed of the Postmaster General and four other members of the cabinet, to have general supervision of the postal savings banks and the administration of the funds.

In each community would be a local board of directors, consisting of the postmaster and four others, two being appointed as expert appraisers of residence property and two elected by the depositors.

The applicant for a home loan would apply to this board making certified statement that he is an American citizen, that he has on deposit in the postal savings bank at least 10% of the value of the home he desires to purchase, and meeting such other requirements as the local board may determine.

Action by the local board would be subject to review by the national board, and if approved the stipulated sum would be advanced to the borrower, on the security of a trust deed upon the home property. The loan would be repaid

in monthly instalments, sufficient to cover interest and principal within a reasonable period.

On a loan for \$3,000, at 6% interest, these monthly payments would be \$33.60, and at the end of ten years the home would be clear of all incumbrances.

There would be a provision for an adequate reserve invested in United States bonds, and the remainder would be loaned in communities where the deposits were made, for the sole purpose of aiding Americans desirous of owning their own homes.

Is it too much to expect that five selected men, residents of the community, can properly appraise the home offered as security and can successfully pass on the honesty and ability of a neighbor to repay the loan?

Hundreds of thousands of merchants are making loans to their customers every day, in many cases to amounts involving thousands of dollars. They take 100% risk, that is they have no security save their customer's record for honesty and his word of honor. Yet the whole fabric of American business is built on just such confidence and credit.

How much additional security is there when back of a loan are not only the honor and integrity and character of the borrower, but the home itself. Officials of some of the largest

home building companies in America have stated that after a quarter of a century and more of experience they have never lost a dollar through the deliberate default of a home purchaser, even though they carried mortgages to an amount equal to 90% of the value of their homes.

It is not to be supposed that the American, borrowing the money of his neighbors for the purchase of a permanent home, will be more ready to default in his obligations to himself, his community and his own government.

Certainly the deposits in the postal savings banks form a trust fund and should be so regarded. But that means far more than simply holding them securely and without loss. It means that there is an obligation so to use these funds that they will advance the public welfare. That obligation has been forgotten entirely under the present system. The deposits of the people are placed in the banks and there is no control whatever over their use to see that they are used to aid Americans and not exploit them.

Those who talk so loudly of the sacredness of trust funds should remember that such sanctity applies first of all to their use. They should be used as far as possible in the community in which they were saved. They should be used for a constructive purpose such as enabling the



worthy American citizen to own his own home.

No more worthy use of a trust fund could be made, and through the great postal service, linking up the individual and the community with the National Government there may be established an American credit union, to the everlasting benefit of the nation. It will be financed with the savings of the people, guarded and controlled by them through their own great agency of public service, the United States Postal System; that institution which, as President Jackson said, "Should serve the body politic, as the veins and arteries serve the natural body."

The United States Postal Commission in 1844 defined the purpose of the postal service as follows:

"To render the citizen worthy by proper knowledge and enlightenment of his important privileges as a sovereign constituent of the government; to diffuse enlightenment, social improvement, national affinities, elevating our people in the scale of civilization and bringing them together in patriotic affection."

In no possible way could these purposes of the postal service be carried out so effectively as by establishing a people's postal bank in every American community, with the savings of the



citizens used for the best interests of the individual, community and nation.

This official declaration points with irresistible logic to the coördination of the post office and the public school. Exactly the same definition, without a single word changed, could be given for the public school system of America.

The public school building is the educational center of the American neighborhood. It should be the community center, where the citizens gather for discussion and decision of their problems.

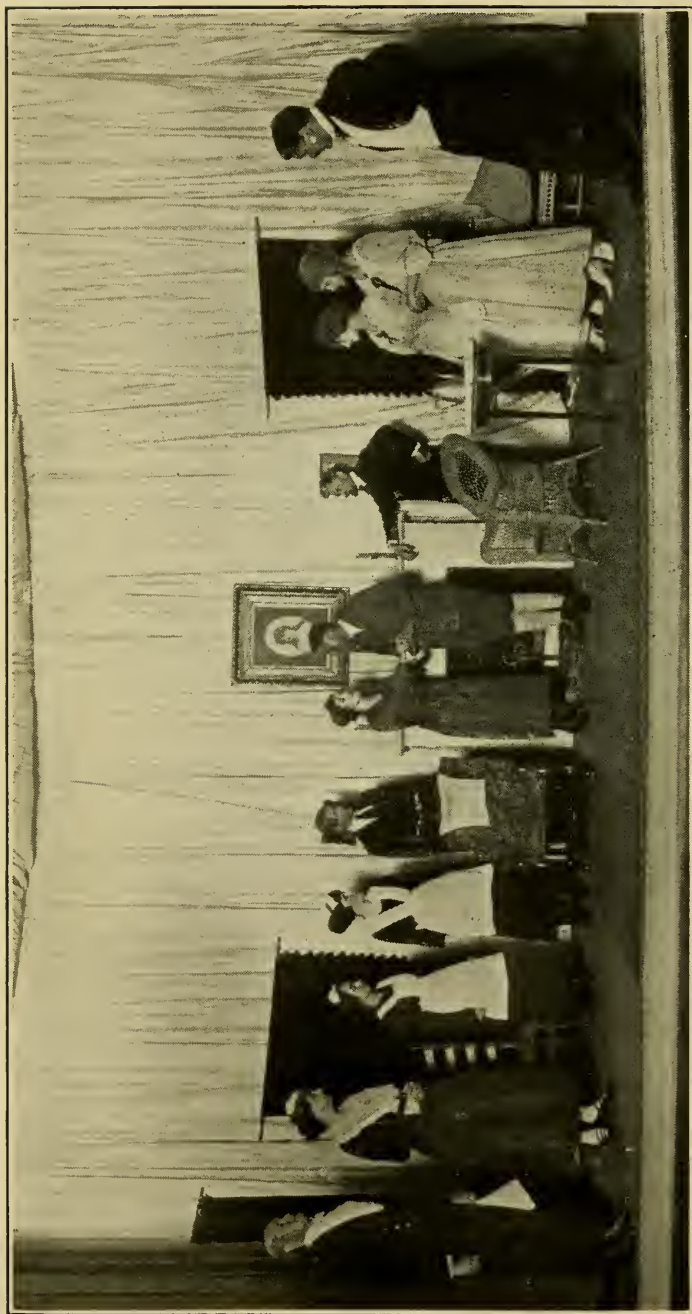
It should also be the postal center, with a credit union for the community welfare, where neighbors coöperate in saving and home building.

Is it not vastly better that this coöperation should be among neighbors than among fellow trades-unionists, fellow grangers or fellow members of any subordinate group whatever?

America is not a collection of groups or sects or classes. It is a vast fraternity of individual Americans.

The real credit union in America can best be established by Americans in the community, as they deposit their savings in the hands of the government which represents the public interest against all private interests. In the community control of these deposits, the lesson of





DRAMA: "OF, BY, AND FOR THE PEOPLE."

Scene in one of the seven plays given in a single season by the Park View players, Washington, a community center organization.

common responsibility and common rights will be learned with incalculable benefits to the nation.

### THE SCHOOLS AS TEACHERS OF THRIFT.

The meaning of thrift will be best taught in the school where the postal savings bank receives the savings of youth and adult, with the assurance that every dollar saved will help to make a better, happier, more prosperous community.

S. W. Straus, President of the American Thrift Society, says, "After years spent in a study of thrift, both in this country and in foreign lands, the following conclusion has been reached. The one best way to make sure that the American of to-morrow will be thrifty is to begin to-day to teach the lesson of thrift in the schools."

"The facilities for saving should begin in the school house," says Milton Harrison, Executive Manager of the Savings Bank Association of the State of New York.

He further says, "Saving money easily becomes a habit with the ordinary child. There is no school lesson the child could learn that will produce better results than that of depositing his pennies and nickels, real money, in the school's savings bank. It gives him an appre-

ciation of individual independence, which if it were learned by all the people, would advance our civilization a thousand years. The establishment of school savings banks is eminently important in further development of thrift facilities.”

Granted that these arguments of eminent apostles of thrift are true, the fact remains that the efforts made since 1885 in America, to establish school savings banks, have met with little success.

The logical method to secure the benefits of schools savings banks is clearly pointed out in the logical coördination of postal service and public schools.

Park View School, in the city of Washington, has for two years been an organized community center and also a postal station of the Washington post office.

Miss Frances S. Fairley, who is principal of the school and community secretary, in her report of two years' experience says:

“Not only has the post office in the school served as a convenience to the public, but as an educational factor in school life, its value cannot be overestimated. The children attend largely to the postal affairs of the family; they mail letters, insure packages, learn weights and rates of different classes of mail matter, register let-

ters, and make out money order applications, learn about postal zones, and so are brought into direct personal relation with the greatest institution of world exchange."

That postal station in the school house sold more Thrift and War Savings Stamps than any other station in the city. It should be made a postal savings bank and stand as a memorial of the important fact that saving and spending for peace is as patriotic a duty as saving and spending for war. By encouraging the establishment of the postal station and postal savings banks in the public schools, and by furnishing the chance for Americans to own their own homes out of their own savings, we may banish for the future the waste and extravagance which has shamed us as a nation.

Such a plan goes to the very heart of the problem, for it will increase savings. It will encourage real thrift among the American people. All the money needed is right here in America. David Friday, of the University of Michigan, after careful study, estimates that the national income in 1917 was \$65,515,000,000. Thirty billions is received as wages by labor and the value of farm products is 24 billions. It is a conservative supposition that 25 billion dollars is received annually by those who are tenants and rent payers.



In view of the fact that one-fourth of the average wage earners' income is paid for rent, a total sum of at least six billion dollars is being expended for rental, without the slightest asset remaining in the end for those who make the expenditure. These payments capitalized into home ownership would meet the need for house construction in America and more besides.

Saving money is not all of thrift or even the most important part. Saving money, in itself, is not even praiseworthy. If it were the miser and the niggard would be the most worthy citizens. A nation of misers would mean for America stagnation, business paralysis, and ultimate destruction. In fact the man who hoards his money in a hiding place is doing as little for the national welfare as the spendthrift who wastes his substance in riotous living.

The great organized thrift agencies, of course, urge the people to save every penny possible and deposit it in banks to be loaned. But even that may not be thrift, from a national standpoint, for the banks may send these accumulated savings to great money centers where the highest rates prevail and thus help build a financial imperialism, of deadly danger to the American people.

Any thrift program which means the common good must go beyond saving and look also to

spending. Ruskin well says, "The vital question for individuals and nations is not, 'how much do you make or save, but to what purpose do you spend?'"

Thrift means better buying. It means sensible spending. The man who is truly thrifty will spend more than the prodigal, for his saving gives him more to spend. Two individuals have incomes of \$2,000 each, on which to support their families. One spends every dollar on consumers' goods, while the other saves \$200, on which he receives interest at 4%. Next year he has \$2,008 income, while his thriftless neighbor has but \$2,000. The vastly important feature is, that when the saving goes into construction, the benefit accrues to the community and nation as well as to the individual.

Thrift is a much-needed virtue in the United States, but the main reason for the fact that we stand in the unlucky position of thirteenth in the list of great nations as to the number of savings banks depositors is that there has been furnished no concrete, obvious incentive for thrift, such as the ownership of a home. The average American will not save unless there is a goal ahead, whose possession is more desirable than present expenditure. Furnish him a place to store his savings in absolute security and at a fair return, such as can be afforded by a real

postal savings bank, and assure him that his savings will be used for the construction of homes, with equal chance for him to have a home-owning opportunity, and you have furnished the concrete thing to embody or measure his thrift and set before him the best investment in America—a home.

#### THRIFT IS PARENT OF PRODUCTIVE POWER.

That kind of thrift directs productive power toward the making of tools, machinery and building materials which add to the permanent wealth of America. It reduces the amount of money spent on useless luxuries, money which is a greater national loss than though it were dumped into the sea. That is true because the demand directs production and when useless things are produced, the man power used is wasted, which is more serious than the loss of money itself.

When a man saves money by cutting down current expenses in order to invest in a home, he saves more than dollars and more than the goods he refrained from buying. He saves the labor and materials it takes to produce those goods and helps to liberate them for the production of every commodity which enters into the construction and equipment of an American home.

Those who complain that the saving of four billion dollars a year and the turning of that fund into building operations will injure other lines of business deserve but one reply. Yes, it will injure some other lines of business which cater to harmful and useless desires and that injury will mean incalculable benefit to America.

America can well afford to lose a few chewing gum factories if she can add more cement grinding factories. She can forego a few limousines in order to get more lumber yards. Brickkilns mean more for national prosperity than beauty parlors, and plumbing fixtures are better than perfumes and patent medicines.

If America can set more stonecutters to work she can dispense with a few diamondcutters. She can thrive with more carpenters and fewer confectioners. She will gain vastly through more dwelling houses and fewer hot-houses and a few Paris fashions may be omitted in order to gain more American furniture.

We may rest assured that the turning of channels of production into useful lines will mean employment for more workers and greater prosperity for the individual American.

"Then," says someone, "The problem is easy. Appeal to the individual and show him the advantages of sensible saving and spending."

That has been largely the method of the great organized thrift agencies of America and they have preached thrift with method and enthusiasm.

Still, 75% of those who die in America leave estates of less than \$500 in value, and the American Bankers Association declares that 90% of the Americans who reach the age of 65 are partly or wholly dependent on relatives, friends or the public.

In spite of all thrift arguments 60% of American families live in rented quarters and the majority of Americans are tenants, without a foothold in America.

No, we might as well admit that the problem of home ownership is not to be solved wholly by the efforts of the individual. The average worker in America cannot buy his own home without some method of coöperation, which will enable him to secure the initial cash payment and pay for his home out of his savings.

America has found that more wealth is produced through coöperation of many persons working together, than by any equal number of individuals working separately.

America must also learn that coöperation in saving creates a collective force which is vastly greater than the separate savings of individuals.



Therefore general home ownership in America is a community problem quite as much as an individual problem. Just as the factory is a kind of coöperative enterprise where individuals are links in the chain of production, so the American community must become the organized entity for carrying out the program of home ownership for its members.

There is a post office in every community and the enlarged postal savings bank may be logically made the community credit union for the service of all the people.

There must a share of community control in the machinery for making loans for home building, for neighbors best know the habits of thrift, industry and integrity of borrowers and indorsers. The community is interested for it profits from every new home built and from every family which becomes a home owner.

After all the approval of neighbors can be made a powerful motive for thrift, and it has been largely overlooked by those who have urged thrift in America.

There is a deep-seated hunger in man for approval and admiration and a shrinking from scorn and derision.

One trouble has been that in most communities there has been ridicule for the thrifty person as a "tight wad" and "miser," and such



public sentiment has led to extravagance and wastefulness and thriftlessness. The community has been so honey-combed with delusions concerning money and its saving and spending that it has been an almost impossible task to persuade the public that thrift is a patriotic duty, in peace as well as in war.

A transformation can be affected by the establishment of a real people's bank in the post office of the community, where the savings of the people are used for building homes and advancing individual community welfare.

Then the community members would see that savings and their purchasing power can direct and control the wheels of industry and that thrift is no penny-counting, cheese-paring, money-hoarding policy, but a great constructive force which can be directed against all harmful processes and made to advance the happiness and welfare of all Americans.

#### CRIMINAL WASTES WILL BE REMEDIED.

This plan furnishes a definite, systematic program to change public sentiment and public practice from harmful habits of thriftlessness into channels of constructive thrift. I contend that without such a redirection of public approval, all appeals to individual thrift will fail in the future as they have failed in the past.

Once let useless and reckless expenditure of money be frowned on by the community as inferiority, and it will shrink away as a vice instead of flaunting itself as a virtue, and thrift will take the place of prodigality.

The thrift I advocate will turn public attention to inexcusable wastes in America. The waste of lumber is criminal. Less than half the tree now reaches the buyer, the rest going to waste in the forest, sawmill and elsewhere along the line of distribution. That annual waste of lumber is estimated at four billion cubic feet, sufficient to build many thousands of the houses so sorely needed. To that loss must be added also the waste caused by forest fires, which destroy \$50,000,000 worth of timber every year.

With the head of every American family directly interested in building materials as a possible home owner, there will come remedy for this shocking waste of products which are essential in the construction of American homes.

So, too, the enlightened selfishness which springs from direct interest will make impossible the blackmailing conspiracies and grafting tactics, as in the building situation in New York City, as exposed by the Lockwood Investigating Committee. Aroused public interest will prove

the cure for dishonest construction, which inflates building costs.

This plan will make of the community a self-developing neighborhood, where the Ishmael philosophy of every man for himself, gives way to the far better teaching "all for one, one for all, and all together for the common cause."

There have been thousands of "friendly societies" organized in England for lending money to members. Why not make every American community a Friendly Society of Citizens using their own public agencies for the public good.

Can it be done safely? In Italy the people's bank has been making for twenty years what they call Loans of Honor. The borrowers are persons who are unable to furnish any security whatever save their word of honor that they will repay the loan. The losses in these Loans of Honor have been insignificant. Has the Italian more integrity than the American? Is the Italian character more trustworthy than the citizen of America?

I will not believe it. The average American is honest and faithful and can be trusted to prove worthy of a loan from the savings of his neighbors and himself, to enable him to own his own home. That process of possession and accomplishment, through the coöperation of neigh-

bors will bring with it stability and responsibility and good citizenship. His home will be a monument to his own thrift, a place of refuge and comfort and security, for himself and his family, not only, but it will also be a monument to that coöperation and mutual help which are essentials of true community spirit.

The home has always meant the noble sentiments of love and unity in family life. It can and should be made to mean the noble sentiment of neighborly kindness and community brotherhood. But some one says, "Admit that general home ownership is a problem for the coöperation of the people of the community. Why then does not the community organize its own building and loan association and finance the building of its own homes?"

That has been the theory of the founders of building and loan associations. They have done a splendid service but with all their efforts, tenantry increases each year and more and more families live in rented quarters.

This problem cannot be solved by the individual alone, nor by the community alone. It is a national problem and there must be used some coördinating agency, such as the American Postal Service, if there is to be a solution.

An Associated Press dispatch in the newspapers recently carried the statement that the

entire village of Sparta, in New York, had been purchased by Frank A. Vanderlip, the New York banker. This financier, recognizing the importance of the housing situation, declared that he would erect twenty modern apartment houses and several other buildings.

His own statement was eloquent: "The village is filled with undesirable citizens," he said, "but when it is reconstructed, I hope to get some nice people."

Is that the solution of the problem? A community here and there under some lord of the manor, who with omnipotent wisdom, will part the sheep from the goats and banish the goats to outer darkness? If that is the best solution, then feudalism is the best social order, and freedom is a delusion.

And what is to become of the "undesirable citizens" however exiled from the community in order to make room for "nice people"? They still remain in America and some other community must of necessity admit their presence. America gains nothing from the transfer and the problem is not only not solved but is made more vexing than ever.

No, the housing problem, and the home-ownership problem is an American as well as a community problem.

It is essential to remember that there can be



no real community in America without communication. Isolation means destruction of the community. When any collection of individuals builds a wall of separation between itself and the rest of America, the sure result is decay, disease, destruction. When people refuse to see America whole and refuse to share with all others in America's rights and duties, they doom themselves.

There have been many so-called American communities, founded on separation, where every member possessed his own home. Some of these artificial assemblages have been made up of atheists and some of religious fanatics, some have sought their spiritual welfare and others have reached for purely material advantage for their members but all have failed to reach their goal.

Peter Armstrong founded the Celesta community in Sullivan county, Pennsylvania, in 1852. He proposed to live with his fellow-members and to allow no outside influences to touch them. He addressed a petition to the Pennsylvania legislature setting forth that he and his followers had "resolved to retire peaceably from the entanglements of the outside world and renounce all allegiance to earthly governments, purposing, in the face of an unbelieving world, to gather and make a wilderness prepa-



ration for the true Canaan." He further asked that "the people of Celesta, now and henceforth be considered as peaceable aliens and religious wilderness exiles from the rest of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania."

But Armstrong learned that facts are stubborn things. He and his followers found that the principle of separation is an impossible basis for association. Division and dissensions arose even in Celesta. In a few years the community was dissolved. The tract of land upon which it was established and which had been deeded to Almighty God "that it might be subjected to bargain and sale by man's cupidity no more forever" was finally sold for taxes and again became subject to bargain and sale under American laws.

The Separatists of Zoar community, at Zoar, Ohio, turned their backs to the great American community and refused to have a share in the giant task of freedom in the Civil War. One of the leaders said that "the one great object of the community was to help its members get to heaven." The complete dissolution of the community may be taken as proof that the pathway to heaven cannot be found through defiance of the great command, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

There have been Perfectionists, and Harmon-





THE COMMUNITY CENTER INSPIRES THE SCHOOL.

School baseball team of Park View, first community center champions of national capital.

ists and True Inspirationists who founded communities in America in order to lead the hermit life. The founder of one of them wrote Rules for Daily Life, which sum up the purposes of them all. He said:

“Have no intercourse with worldly-minded men; never seek their society; speak little with them and never without need; and then not without fear and trembling. Do not waste time in public places and worldly society, that ye be not tempted and led away. Contain yourself, remain at home, in the house and in your heart.”

One and all of these organizations, whose members pledged themselves never to join or coöperate in any other human association have been engulfed in oblivion. They sinned against the light of fellowship and brotherhood. When separation is made the creed of a community, the poisonous effects spread to the individual members. Through the history of all these attempts to found hermit communities runs the scarlet thread of division and dissension. Factions rise and secede from the parent body. Malcontent members are admitted and hasten to the work of destruction. Eric Jansen, founder of the Jansenist community at Bishop Hill, Illinois, was shot to death by one of his members. Etienne Cabet, founder of the Icarian communities, was expelled in disgrace by his

associates. Thomas Lake Harris with his Brotherhood of New Life communities, had his Lawrence Oliphant, who disrupted his "angel planned" neighborhoods.

Nor have the Separatist communities based on economic doctrines been more successful than those founded on religious ideals.

There was the Brook Farm community, with its array of brilliant members and supporters, which found, according to one of its leaders, that although "there were philosophers enough in it, the hard-fisted toilers and the brave financiers were absent." There was the North American Phalanx, with Horace Greely as its patron, but it too, went to destruction because of secessions and inner struggles.

Fourierism led to the founding of twenty communities between 1841 and 1844, but one and all perished from the earth because of enmities caused by separation. The Equality communities and the Ruskin Commonwealths went down amid civil wars and internal disputes and the annihilated hopes of their members.

#### "ISOLATION" CONTAINS SEED OF DESTRUCTION.

All of these so-called communities have been cloistered retreats which contained within themselves the seed of their destruction. The first one established in this country was at Ephrata



in Lancaster county, Pennsylvania, and its headquarters was called the Kloister. I have seen its great wooden buildings, which were erected like the temple at Jerusalem, without the sound of a hammer and which contained hundreds of cell-like rooms. A life of seclusion and separation was the ideal of Conrad Beissel and his followers. In the utter desolation which reigns there to-day, one may read the fallacy of such a theory in American life. Just as the wounded Revolutionary soldiers took possession of the buildings after the Battle of Brandywine so the realities of life have swept away the hermit existence of the brothers of Ephrata. The Kloister stands as a symbol, in its desertion and despair, of the impossibility of any community shutting itself away from the currents of American life. It cannot be accomplished and every serious attempt to do so has met the doom of destruction.

Not only must communities in America be organized on the all-inclusive principle, so that every resident may realize his membership, but the communities must be joined in intercourse and fellowship with all other American communities. Communicate means to share with others and every community must share with all others in working out the destiny and glory of America. There must be a process of shar-



ing experience until it becomes a common experience for only thus may errors be rejected and the truth made victorious.

The need is to have the local community connected directly with the national capitol at Washington and then with all other communities. The coördination found in the human brain is essential to the welfare of the nation. In the brain are from 600,000,000 to 1,000,000,000 cells, each having a separate existence. Without them, or with them only, man would be a clod. These cells are connected by from 4 to 5 billion fibres which convey impressions from one cell to another and bring about coördinated and combined action.

How shall this coördination be accomplished? In every community there is a post office, and connecting every community is the postal service, the greatest system of communication in the world.

Better than in any other way, we may thus make it possible to say in the days to come that "we are a happy people, a prosperous people and a peaceable people, because we are a home-owning people."

Out of our mighty resources and marvelous thrift in 1917 and 1918, we built the mightiest war machine the world has ever seen. We built a bridge of ships from New York to Bordeaux

and over it sent two million men, better fed and better equipped than any army since the world began.

You remember how posters and signboards and advertisements in the newspapers and orators on platforms told the American people what their savings would buy for the soldier boys fighting under Old Glory in Flanders Fields and for the soldiers training in the camps at home.

A single thrift stamp bought a tent pole, a belt, a hat cord or an identification tag. Two thrift stamps bought a pair of woolen gloves. Four bought two pairs of leggings, and six bought five pairs of woolen socks.

One war savings stamp bought a hundred cartridges, or a scabbard for a bayonet. Two bought a gas mask. Three bought an overcoat and five bought a rifle.

Under the patriotic inspiration of saving for war, America astonished the world, and then with the victory won, threw off restraint and extravagance reigned again.

It is high time to call attention to the fact that there is patriotism in saving for peace. Let us raise aloft the slogan, not by preaching thrift for itself, but by creating the machinery necessary to prove it to the complete satisfaction of the average man, the real ruler of America.

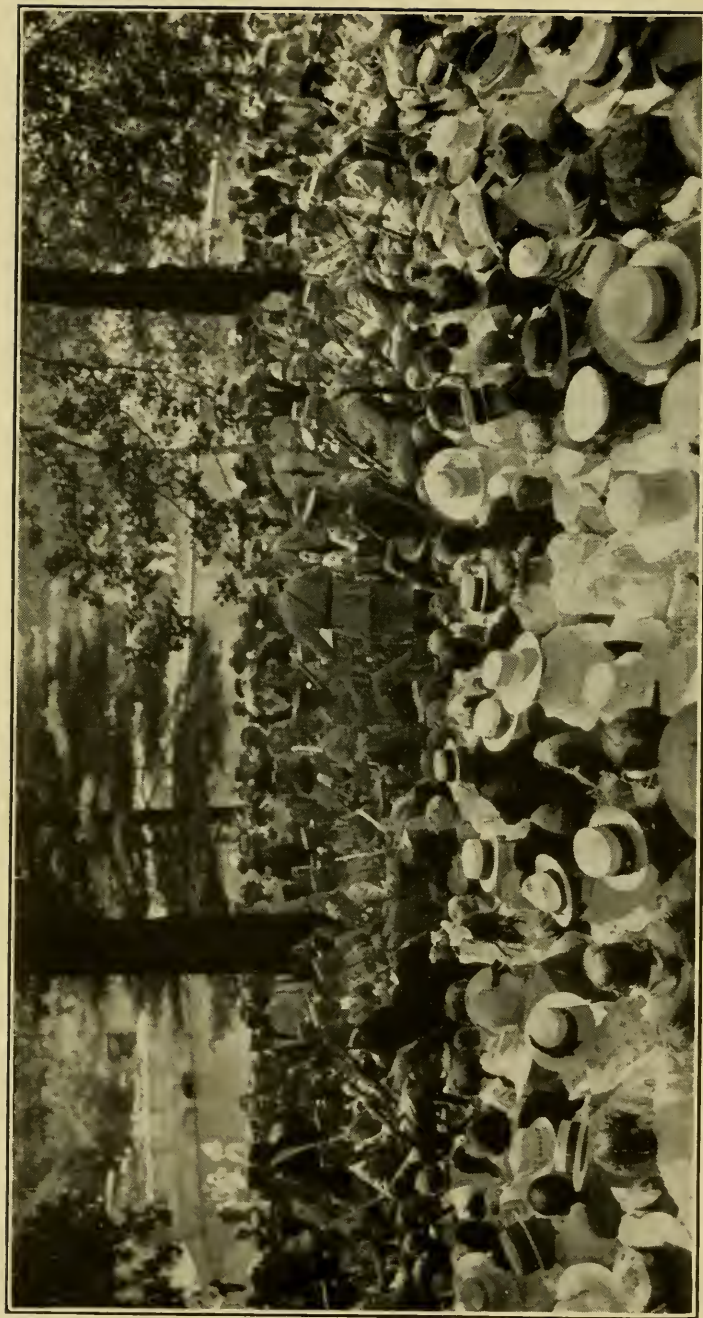
Let us put up the far nobler posters of peace, showing that a home savings stamp will buy lumber, bricks, cement, house-fittings. Let us prove that home savings stamps will buy homes, and that home-owning means patriotism and victory now just as much as guns and ammunition meant patriotism and victory during the war. America fought for the protection of American homes against Prussia. Let us show that that fight was not in vain.

Let us advertise the fact that a man who now pays \$30 a month rent and has nothing to show for it in the end, may deposit that amount in the people's bank in his community and at the end of ten years have enough to buy his home outright, or through the coöperation with his neighbors may live in his own house, while he pays for it out of his savings.

Let us give every man, woman and child, direct contact with their government through their deposits made in the home post office, and thus make every citizen realize his membership in America.

Justice, patriotism, necessity and business sense unite in this coördination of individual, community and National Government for home building. Out of such mobilization and use of the resources of America may come the modern





CELEBRATING "INTER-DEPENDENCE DAY."

Ambassador Jusserand of France and the French National Band at a Park View Fourth of July observance.

fruition of the ancient plan of Jubilee, with every worthy citizen of America dwelling in his own home and eating in happiness the bread he has earned. To have hoped for that day and worked for its coming is to be a lover of America.





Part V

The One Big Union—America



## V.

### THE ONE BIG UNION—AMERICA.

The glare of the labor question is in our eyes. It cannot be ignored. It cannot be sneered down or ridden down. It must be faced and settled with finality in the here and now.

It is no new question, for it has puzzled and baffled men in all the ages. Its scarlet thread in the web of human annals tells of bloody struggles and portrays the fierce shapes of old enmities. Down all the years of the past there come the clangor of arms and the cries of combatants, engaged in the most terrible of all conflicts—the social wars of mankind.

In America, the industrial revolution, which changed completely the structure and organization of industry, began during the period of our war for political independence. It was then that the steam engine harnessed the power of nature to whirring wheels. The steam boat and the locomotive followed and transportation took on new meaning. Machines of every kind were invented to perfect production. The simple tools and implements which had been used by individual workmen gave way to these expen-

sive power machines. Employers, organized for mammoth production, built great factories, and in time, armies of workers, employed in these mighty plants, were performing the industrial tasks of the nation.

American industrial history is therefore the history of the factory system. The labor problem here is whether or not, under that system, justice can be secured, the rights of employers safeguarded and the right of men to an opportunity to labor on just and reasonable terms, assured.

We must recognize the fact that the system makes certain that the chances are overwhelming that the present wage earners will always be wage earners. In the cotton manufacturing business there are 2,765 wage earners to one proprietor and in many other industries the proportion is still greater. It is worse than useless to keep repeating the parrot cry, "There is always room at the top" for there is not room at the top for everybody in modern industry. There is far more chance of a steel worker being burned to death in a vat of molten metal than in his becoming president of the United States Steel Corporation.

The vastly important thing is, not that there shall be room at the top for everybody, but that there shall be room for everybody in America

to develop to his very best capabilities, under conditions that are just and fair.

The experience of a century and more has taught us that the factory system, in itself, does not assure justice. The "let alone" policy of Adam Smith, which was to bring the square deal as the result of the free play of individual selfishness, has proved a bitter fallacy. Under the law of tooth and claw, in the storm of jungle competition, the life and flesh and blood of workers are always regarded as commodities to be purchased in the lowest market possible.

Perhaps the results of the Ishmael philosophy applied to industry, are best given by the United States government itself in its advertising posters soliciting the enlistment of young men in the Navy.

In these huge advertisements, placarded over the entire country, the differences between jobs in civil life and in the United States Navy are summarized. In civil life it is declared that—"Jobs are uncertain, there are strikes, layoffs and sickness. Promotion and advancement are uncertain and slow. Favoritism and partiality are frequently shown. The pay is small and limited while learning a trade. There is the same old, monotonous grind every day. The working place is stuffy, gloomy and uninteresting. The pay stops and the doctor bills start



when sickness comes. Little or no pay if disabled or injured. On death, the family gets only what has been saved from small wages. Little clear money and nearly all the pay goes for living expenses. When old age comes the job goes to a younger and more active man."

### STRIFE SOWS SEEDS OF FUTURE CONFLICT.

That is the summary of the industrial system as given by Uncle Sam himself. It is the government of the United States giving the conditions of the workers in our modern industry. Little wonder that such a situation has been a sullen incentive to anarchy and strife.

There have been ominous storms of protest. From Pittsburgh, Homestead, Lawrence, West Virginia, Colorado, Michigan and many other places have come the echoes of great labor battles, where workers have sought to secure just conditions through force. But the violence which has marked countless labor disputes has never brought and will never bring, industrial justice. Each time the uprising has been quenched in blood.

Still the triumphant forces have not found final victory. Always there has been preparedness on the part of the defeated ones for new conflict on the morrow. Such a spirit of revolt does not make for success in any undertaking

and the employers have lost and the nation has lost through the bitterness engendered by these struggles, to say nothing of the vast losses as the direct results of the battles between these rival groups of Americans.

Violence will not bring justice, neither will it quench the urge for justice in the human heart. Around the walls of the balcony in the capitol at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, in illuminated text, is a quotation from Madison :

“Justice is the end of government. It is the aim of civil society. It ever has been pursued and always will be pursued, until it be attained, or Liberty lost in the pursuit.”

That saying is gospel truth. Industrial justice has been pursued, but not yet attained in America. It must be secured or the Republic is doomed. Discontent fills the hearts of men and the contagion of unrest spreads like the plague. Let America perpetuate the hideous exploitation of her wage earners and less fortunate classes by those who live upon the labor of others and her fate is sealed; she dies a suicide.

There is industrial war in America; the vital need is industrial peace. How shall that peace be secured?

Out of the confusion and strife there come various answers to that dynamic question. Here are a few great capitalists and employers, thank God they are very few, who step boldly forth with their answer—an iron ultimatum to labor. Frankly they declare that they would bring peace by the mailed fist of autocratic power. They would favor a nation-wide lockout, if necessary, over a period long enough to compel the workers to accept their terms. They would teach the “dogs” their places by starving them into submission. They insist that they have the right, legitimately and by the grace of God, to rule industry and that they should have the power to crush out resistance and compel peace.

Strangely enough, from the opposite pole comes exactly the same answer. The extreme radicals of the labor movement, the Reds, would bring industrial peace also by dictatorship, but it would be the dictatorship of the proletariat. They would build up such a powerful organization of wage-earners that it would be able to make repeated assaults upon the citadels of capitalism and then, in one great struggle, overthrow it completely. Through the One Big Union of industry, they would take control of both industrial and political institutions and establish the soviet commonwealth, under the crimson flag.

No sane man believes that either the Bourbon or Bolshevik policy will bring industrial peace in America. They propose an absolute monarchy in the day when Czar and Kaiser have been overthrown. Their fallacies have been shot to pieces on a thousand battlefields and the autocracy they advocate has been buried, beyond hope of resurrection. In all America, happily, not one per cent of the people have any sympathy with the desires and purposes of these upholders of the black flag of piracy and the red flag of anarchy.

Neither of these groups takes into account the inescapable truth that justice must precede industrial peace. But here comes trade-unionism, with the declaration that it can secure justice and peace through complete organization of the workers. They insist that collective bargaining will insure coöperation and mutual good feeling between employers and employes and that the workers' fair share of the product may thus be secured.

Now, the War Labor Board was eternally right when it laid down as its first principle to govern relations between workers and employers in war industries, the right of collective bargaining. It recited this right as follows:

“The right of workers to organize in trade-unions and to bargain collectively through

chosen representatives is recognized and affirmed. This right shall not be denied, abridged or interfered with in any manner whatsoever by the employers. The right of employers to organize in associations or groups and to bargain collectively through chosen representatives is recognized and affirmed. This right shall not be denied, abridged or interfered with by the workers in any manner whatsoever."

Collective bargaining between employes and employer is an essential in any proper organization of industry. The old formula "freedom of contract" is a lying phrase when one man is compelled to contract with a great corporation for his labor. It is then only the freedom to work under the conditions offered or to starve. Such a phrase can be used to-day only by those who are grewsomely facetious or incurably ignorant. "Take the wages or quit the job" is a deadly alternative to the man who must earn the bread for himself and his family in the sweat of his brow and can find no other job.

Organization is a shield for the employe against an arbitrary and despotic attitude on the part of the employer. In their organized capacity the workers can deal on equal footing on questions concerning wages, hours of labor, conditions of employment, sanitary and safety appliances and other factors which involve their



health, comfort and safety. It compels the employer to look at his problems from both sides and the man who thinks only about his own selfish interest, soon loses the capacity to think intelligently about even that.

The opposition to organized labor on the part of many employers on the ground that unions sometimes act unreasonably and brutally, is not conclusive. If power is to be denied all who abuse it, the corporations of America would be the first to meet the prohibition, for there are ten reasons for abolishing all corporations to one for abolishing all trade-unions.

No intelligent man desires to outlaw corporations and neither should he desire to ban trade-unions. The unions have been guilty of many mistakes but they have had to fight for every inch of their upward climb. They have had to travel a path filled with perilous pitfalls laid by enemies determined on their total destruction. They have faced concentrated capital, bent on war to the knife and knife to the hilt. They have met in combat an enemy with the power to take the means whereby their members lived. They have been forced to meet distorted and misinformed public opinion, newspaper invective and chop logic with no means of effective reply.

The unions have made manifold mistakes, it



is true, but they were made amid the bitterness and hatreds of war. In spite of all, they have had a tremendous part in forcing recognition of the fact that men are more than simply hewers of wood and drawers of water; that life is more than heart-breaking toil without hope. They have earned, when everything is considered, the approbation of right-thinking and forward-looking men.

#### ORGANIZATION NECESSARY—BUT NOT FOR BATTLE.

While workers should have the unquestioned right to organize for their own betterment, that right should be equally the possession of employers. The needs of America cannot be supplied without the organized use of capital. The industrial achievements through which this nation must express her real message to the world can only be accomplished through close coöperation between the enterprises of the country.

Is this then, the answer to the problem of attaining justice and industrial peace? Will 100% organization of the workers of America, on one side, and their employers, on the other, permanently allay the social unrest which flames in America?

No, the complete organization of capital and labor, with equal division of power between

them, will not solve the problem. That is a great forward step from absolute monarchy in industry, the kind typified by "Divine Right" Baer, who declared that the anthracite coal mines had been committed to his keeping by the decree of God and therefore the output of the mines and the conditions of labor were his personal responsibilities under the Almighty. It is a great forward step from the absolute monarchy of a Lenine or Trotsky, with the bayonets of their Red Guard at the throats of a race of slaves.

Still, carrying the answer of trade-unionism to its logical end, would bring us only to a limited monarchy in industry. It is the plan of Runnymede, where the barons of England insisted on sharing the power of the king. Just as the king and barons, when possessed of all power, looked upon the great mass of the people as made only for their prosperity, so would complete power in the joint hands of capital and labor mean injury to the American public and a renewed blazing up of revolt and discontent.

It is of vital importance that neither or both of these two parties in industry become group brigands to prey upon the rest of the community. Organized Capital must not be permitted to profiteer at the expense of Labor, nor must Labor be allowed to exact profiteering

wages simply because its organization is powerful enough to enforce its demands. There is an interest higher than the interest of either or both of them—the public interest.

It will not suffice for groups of us to get together, for the most harmonious agreement between employers and employes might mean benefit for these rival forces, while every other element in America is injured. When the employer grants a wage increase to his workers and immediately tacks it to the price of his product, together with a a percentage of profit, the public pays the bill. And that means, of course, that these workers themselves are caught in the vicious cycle for as consumers they soon find that the increased pay envelope is still insufficient to meet expenses.

In fact, all the widely-heralded increases in wages between 1913 and 1920 left the average worker in far worse position than he was in the beginning. Based on the cost of living, the workers in America in 1919 received only 69 cents in real wages where they received \$1.00 in 1913. The real interests of labor depend upon the recognition of their solidarity of interest and obligation as members of America, part of the great public, which includes all groups.

There can be no industrial peace without social justice, and the pathway to social justice

is not through absolute monarchy, nor limited monarchy, but through democracy. That goal will be the crowning achievement of the industrial development of the centuries.

The very first essential is a realization of the fact that industrial relations in America are not to be decided by Capital and Labor, acting as groups. Every man, woman and child has a life and death interest in this relationship. Not alone for themselves and their families do coal operators and miners combine to dig the black diamonds from the earth. Starvation and death in far distant places will follow their refusal or neglect to carry out the tasks they have undertaken. Let the men engaged in the management and operation of any one of a dozen essential industries fail to "carry on" and the result is chaos, privation and death in every part of America.

By the first law of nature, self-preservation, every American has a right to a voice in assuring such relations in industry as will mean uninterrupted peace and production. It is indeed true, in an industrial sense that

"Like warp and woof all destinies  
Are woven fast. All linked together  
Like the keys of an organ vast.  
Tear one thread and the web ye mar,  
Break but one of a thousand keys  
And the paining jar through all shall run."

More than that, by the law of business justice, every American has a right to direct influence in determining industrial conditions even though he be neither a capitalist employer nor a wage earning employe. There would be no industry without the consuming public. Neither profits nor wages would be possible without the American community, which furnishes the market for all products. The contention that the great mass of Americans must stand aside while comparatively small groups decide this preëminent problem is as illogical as though collectors and debtors should demand the right to divide between themselves the money owed to the firm. The public is the principal in all industrial transactions. The people, through their purchasing power, commission men to make certain products, as surely as though they had given direct orders. It is the public demand which decides production and the public has the right to determine the conditions under which its goods are produced.

#### THE COMMUNITY AND CLASS-DISPUTES.

That means that the people must get together for the solution of this problem, not as groups or classes, but as Americans, every single one of us, every employer and manager, every labor unionist and unorganized worker, every citizen.



The community combines in itself the opposing interests of Capital and Labor, both seeking a larger share of the product. The community is interested in seeing justice done both employer and employe, and where their interests are not identical, can best compose the dispute, through all-sided consideration.

In a report of the Industrial Conference, headed by William B. Wilson, Secretary of Labor, and Herbert Hoover, made to the President of the United States, it is recognized that there is a conflict of interest in certain particulars, between workers and proprietors, but concludes "that it is the part of statesmanship to organize identity of interest, where it exists, in order to reduce the field of the conflict."

While that is true, is it not far more the part of statesmanship to organize the community identity of interest so that the conflict itself may be made unnecessary? We cannot expect Labor to break the vicious cycle of high prices. Nor have decent employers the power to bring about just conditions through their own efforts. That can be done however, by the community, not a disorganized mob fumbling over divergent policies, but an organized entity, possessed of the sense of unity and the power of effective action in the light of all the facts involved.

In the voice of the American public which is



demanding justice and peace in industry, there are blended the tones of every right-thinking employer and employe. There are thousands of employers like that president of a Long Island cotton manufacturing plant who said, "In our various cotton mills we hold to the theory that our principal product should be happy, prosperous men and women first and good cotton cloth second." In time of war, too, it was the American Federation of Labor which was among the first to declare its loyalty to the government, saying with virile courage and patriotism.

"We, with the ideals of justice and liberty as the indispensable basis for national policies, offer our services to our country in every field of activity, to defend, safeguard and preserve the Republic of the United States against its enemies, whosoever they may be, and we call upon our fellow workers and fellow citizens, in the holy name of labor, justice and freedom, to devotedly and patriotically give their services."

We have no right to assume that the majority of American employers and employes will not help to establish justice and peace through democracy until it has been tried. We have been trying to find a royal road to social justice and a patent panacea for our industrial ills and it is little wonder that there has been no re-

sponse. The countless schemes and notions; the organizations for the relief of every ill under the sun; the commissions investigating everything in sight; have all come to nothing and have generally merited the contempt they received. No other reception could be expected from the flaming announcements in the daily newspapers of such social renovators as "Down with Apartment Houses," "National Extravagance the Source of Decay," "Cheaper Cuts of Meat," "Overalls Clubs," "Save Two Cents a Week and Grow Rich," "Conservation of Old Clothes," and so on ad nauseam.

In the midst of an avalanche of such superficialities, there is a demand coming from every quarter that we get down to bed rock. It is admitted that there are radical wrongs in our industrial system and that there is industrial war which injures every American, rich and poor, old and young. It is time that we buckle down to the solution of the problem in the strength of all-of-us.

In the organized public sentiment of the community is found the one sure hope in America for the solution of the vexing labor question. When a party of gold-seekers, on their way to the Klondyke became confused in a maze of mountains and had no maps to guide them, they climbed to the highest possible point, surveyed

the country beyond, discussed the possibilities of the situation and then took a vote as to which pass they should use in their effort to get to their Promised Land. Sometimes, they made mistakes and were forced to return to the starting place or to climb another pass. But they remained united. If they had divided into little groups, each taking the different routes which presented themselves, the entire party would have perished in the snow.

Because they all accepted the will of the majority and remained together, they reached their destination safely.

So, to-day, in facing the uncharted future, it is the obligation of every American to give his honest counsel for the common weal, in conference with his fellow-Americans and then follow the course laid down by the majority will. It is the obligation of America to make possible the organization of the community, so that full and free deliberation may help toward those just decisions, which in spite of mistakes and retracings, will enable all of us to enter at last the Promised Land of industrial justice and peace.

Only through organization of the citizenship in the communities of America, may we attain industrial democracy. This much-discussed democracy in industry is not secured by "wage

workers at the director's table'' nor by other theories which are so widely current. If the English plan of "workers' control" were carried to the end desired by its enthusiasts and control were finally surrendered by employers to their wage-earners, even then we might have an autocracy in industry which would work deadly injury to the American public and settle none of the vexing phases of the labor problem.

#### CONTROL BY ALL THE PEOPLE MAKES DEMOCRACY.

Democracy is not realized by shifting partial or entire control from one group to the other. It is the control of all the people in every factor, social, political and industrial which makes American civilization.

That means government of the people, for the people and by the people. But the people can not govern unless they can get together for mutual counsel and conference. And ready for the use of American communities, as capitols in which they may formulate their will, stands the great public school system of the nation. The community of ownership in the school building proves the community of interest. The school building is the center of the neighborhood: it is the logical assembly house of the people.

Not in great buildings erected by manufacturer's associations and chambers of commerce,

nor in labor temples, will this flaming problem of industrial justice be solved. Only in the assemblies of the community, in the publicly-owned school buildings, will the hostilities of warring groups be transformed into fellowship. Only there will it be realized that organizations of labor and capital are not ends in themselves, but means to an end—the advancement of the common good.

Such a statement is not theory; it has been demonstrated a fact in actual experience. In no industrial center in the United States, during the period of the war with Germany, was the economic conflict more acute than in Bridgeport, Connecticut. The War Labor Board officially declared that in this city the trouble became so widespread that it finally terminated in “the case of the employes versus the employers of Bridgeport.”

After full investigation, the War Labor Board, headed by William H. Taft and Frank P. Walsh, made its award, which contained as its first provision, the right of collective bargaining. Almost every industry in the city was unorganized, so that it became necessary to affect new organizations of the workers.

The report of the United States Bureau of Education for 1919 shows the methods adopted for meeting this problem. It is stated in this



report that the only housing that would serve for the coming together of the whole body of employes to exercise the right of collective bargaining was the equipment of the public school system.

The city Board of Education recognized the right of the citizens of the several local districts to assemble for organized conference and coöperation in the school buildings, and furnished from public funds the money to pay the incidental expenses of such assemblies. The War Labor Board furnished out of the public funds appropriated for its work, a due proportion of the compensation of the local community secretaries, chosen, not by employes alone, nor by employers alone, nor by both groups together, but by the whole body of citizens, organized as a community association in each school district.

The community secretary was responsible, under this all-inclusive citizenship association, for supervision of all special group uses of the school building. The employes met in the school buildings and formulated their decisions. The public was fully informed of the action taken and it was discussed in the community assembly in such a spirit of fair play that both employes and employers expressed their gratification.

The "unconditional surrender" demand of



the employers was modified by conditions. The "irreducible minimum" of the workers was reduced in various particulars and the compromises were the result of an enlightened, organized, public sentiment.

The Bureau of Education makes this statement concerning the success of the plan:

"There were no incidents of disorder in the uses that were made of the school buildings, despite the intensity of hostile feeling that prevailed in the city, and a fundamentally important demonstration was given that when adequate and permanent provision is made for the use of the public school buildings, in accordance with the essential principles of the district school meeting, the instrumentality is secured for dealing democratically with the problems of industrial adjustment, by means of debate instead of dynamite."

In the community spirit, which builds civic pride and civic health both employers and employes in Bridgeport joined and worked with a will for the common good. Public sentiment inspired them both to a self-respecting desire to ask only what was just and fair to all concerned. Their desire to merit popular good will and the knowledge that the entire community was informed as to all aspects of the situation, made harmonious agreement easy.



"ABOVE ALL NATIONS, HUMANITY."

Community center orchestra, every member an American of different national origin.



Former Secretary of Labor Wilson, one of the best informed men in America on the phases of the labor question, has said:

“Money and hours are but incidentals in the fight. The real thing that is being fought over by employers and wage earners, is self-respect. The employer feels that he cannot give up for fear of losing his self-respect and prestige. The wage workers feel that they cannot give up for fear of losing their self-respect. Statistics show that pride is the one great cause of labor troubles.”

Is it not plain that the one best guarantee for the self-respect of both employers and workers is found in the enlightened decision of the whole community? In the gathering of the neighborhood; in all sided consideration of the points at issue, the judgment of the community carries with it the satisfaction to both sides of having met the test of the common welfare. The self-respect of both groups is secured and strengthened because of complete recognition of the essential qualities of both planners and doers, leaders and followers, toilers with head and hand.

That judgment of the community, every member of which is vitally concerned, will be more just than can be secured through any other tribunal. The fairest way ever devised to se-

cure a fair decision on any question is to have men argue both sides before the community. It is certain then that not only will every important consideration have its due notice but that also it will have its due weight, since every element is fairly represented.

Every experience in community action has proved that the people are fair and just. Groups that were afraid to trust their interests to the whole people have found that their doubts were groundless and have come to have an abiding faith in the essential good sense and desire for a square deal on the part of the public. They have been somewhat like the banker, in the early days of Wisconsin, who started his financial institution by renting an empty store building and painting the word "Bank" on the window. On the first day a business man came in and deposited one hundred dollars and on the second day five citizens deposited fifty dollars each. In telling about it in the days of his success, the banker said, "Along about the third day I got confidence enough in the bank to put in a hundred myself."

#### A SINGLE SAFE DEPOSITORY OF POWER.

The whole community is the one safe depository of power, worthy of the confidence of all. Of course, it is essential that there be real com-



munity organization, that is an all-inclusive membership. Several cities have recently transformed chambers of commerce into so-called community service organizations. In their attempts to interfere with the settlement of labor disputes they have met the bitter hostility and uncompromising antagonism of the workers and their efforts have only added fuel to the flames. Such a condition does not develop when the entire community is organized in its own community house, and where every man and woman, by virtue of citizenship and residence in the community is a member.

Such organization not only has the right of decision but it has the power to enforce decision. There is not a business in America save private monopolies which are intolerable in a free land and whose foundations of privilege can be destroyed by common action, which dares to stand against an aroused and organized public sentiment. Millions of dollars are spent annually by great industries for the sole purpose of securing the good will of the purchasing public. With a real consumers league, composed of every member of the community, the power is at hand to enforce conditions of production in accordance with the public conscience.

Nor can labor, great as it is, win against the sense of justice of the organized community.



Just contracts, fairly entered into between employers and employes may be enforced by public opinion. Once there comes the recognition of the solidarity, not of labor and not of capital, but of the community, the foundation will be laid for a better social order and the way prepared for a better day.

The community must be organized if the barbarism of strikes and lockouts, the costly wars of industry, are to be abolished. It would be the essence of injustice, under present conditions to forbid men to strike, when their welfare demands it. The strike is an abomination, but it is the one weapon in the hands of labor. Take that weapon away, and give them nothing in its place and you make workers slaves. To attempt it is folly, for work and service are matters of the active, free determination of the individual. We cannot run the industries of America by putting in jail all those who refuse to work, for the one, all sufficient reason that there are not jails enough to meet the test. What is needed is a new spirit, a new motive, and this can only come through the understanding which follows community coöperation in the advancement of the common weal.

There has been a fatal confusion in dealing with the strike weapon of labor. The problem of the righteousness of cutting up a living man

with a sharp knife, depends on whether the knife is in the hands of a surgeon, an assassin, an executioner or a man acting in self-defense. It will not do to assert that the strike, itself, dissociated from all motives and purposes, is the entire menacing problem.

Under present conditions, the workers are compelled to hold the strike weapon for use in their own self-defense, for the protection of their very lives. With it they may match, to some degree, the economic power of their employers. But it is possible to place in their hands and in that of their employers, another and better weapon, the sword of reason, by which both may appeal for final judgment, direct to the public conscience.

Only when there is such a court of appeal, an organization of all the people, associated together in a common assembly for the discussion and decision of every industrial problem, can the strike be prohibited with justice. Only when equal rights and privileges are assured to men, as neighbors and citizens, have we any right to appeal to the duty of equal obligations. The two must go hand in hand.

The claim of labor to the right to strike is based on the fact that it is the final means of enforcing justice from an autocratic control of industry. When autocracy is overthrown by

democracy, that just and proper reason disappears. What is now a right, will become only a claim for a class privilege to injure the public, once the communities of America are organized for effective action.

One of the outstanding features of the railroad strike in April, 1920, was the appearance of volunteer workers who undertook to man the trains. In Kansas, the governor called for such volunteers, when the miners went on strike.

Out of these sporadic instances of the use of amateur strike-breakers has come a demand from certain quarters for an industrial militia, to be composed of volunteers, ready at all times to take the place of workers who go on strike.

It should require little intelligence to see how vicious such a program would be, under present conditions, even if it could possibly be made effective. If it were to be of any service at all, this industrial militia would necessarily be commanded by a few men, generals of the army, whose desire would be solely to cripple labor, regardless of the justice of its cause. There have been many instances where the regular militia of a state, controlled by sinister interests, have slaughtered men and women with horrible brutality. An irresponsible organization like the "industrial militia," commanded by men bent on sending the workers back to

service, beaten, cowed and submissive, would be much more terrible.

The comments of certain metropolitan newspapers that this movement is a "renewed proof of Americanism" are arrant nonsense. It is simply an added fagot on the fire of class consciousness, which is the very opposite of Americanism. It is not at all a case of the public organizing to meet the strike peril but is simply another cartridge for the gun of autocratic capital.

There will indeed be justice in a rallying of volunteer workers to man essential industries, where the organized public has weighed the issues involved, has understood the purposes of the groups in conflict and has made decision. Then if labor should turn traitor to the public will, patriotic Americans would have every right to deal with the strikers as "outlaws."

### THE ONE BIG UNION OF AMERICA.

We do not need any "Middle Class" unions, as projected in several cities. We need no more group organizations and class associations of any kind. We need the One Big Union of America, not the One Big Union of Syndicalism, whose program is a defiant challenge to democracy. The organized community is a union strong enough to see that all classes are treated

fairly, squarely, justly and righteously. With the community having power, through all-inclusive organization, the problem is solved, for then the circle is complete. No class can profit from another class, without injury to the community. The community, properly organized, can defend itself against the exactions of either capital and labor, or both. It can and will say to both of these groups, which are included in itself, "We will have neither the autocracy of Bourbonism or Bolshevism, nor the limited monarchy of final power in the hands of united capital and labor. We will see that justice is done both groups, but we propose to see that America is run, industrially and politically, by the whole American people."

In a brochure, recently issued, a writer on industrial questions classifies the workers, who, in his opinion, have the right to strike and those who do not possess such a right. He states that all useful, commercial workers, either handling materials, or marketing personality, have the right to strike.

The others he classifies as workers who have chosen to serve humanity rather than self. In this class he includes the upholders of right conduct between ourselves and our neighbors, such as ministers, judges, officials of government, soldiers, sailors and policemen: those who have



chosen to promote and direct, through associated effort, the uplift of individuals, community or state: those who have taken up the duty of teaching: those who work for an ideal or a cause: those who advise and counsel men and women as to vocational aptitude.

After a study of such classification, immediately the query comes, by what right is any good American citizen excluded from these latter classes? Has not every real American, regardless of his daily occupation, a place in one of them?

If Americans meet as neighbors and friends in community association, to coöperate for the common good, no occupational line can separate individuals who are earnestly striving to serve humanity, to uphold right conduct, to uplift the community and state, to promote the community health, to be teachers and learners, going to school to each other, to give counsel in choosing occupations and to work for the greatest ideal and cause in the world—democracy.

When the community emerges as an all-inclusive organization of Americans, with every individual possessing the sense of membership, there need be no industrial war, for the community will not use the strike or lockout against itself.

There is only one rightful authority to enforce



compulsory arbitration. It is the community directly concerned, which, in its organized assembly, has heard and weighed all the facts on which to force the getting together of rival forces on a just basis. Only with such backing has an arbitration board the right to order employers to operate and employes to work under explicit directions. For it is the community which has a vital interest in weighing the record of profits and losses from the employers' books and also in maintaining a living standard, consistent with health, comfort and wholesome development.

If the policy of real home rule is adopted in our industrial relations, reason and justice will take the place of passion and prejudice. Such an outcome may mean disaster to the professional "labor agitator" and "labor baiter," but perhaps it would drive them both to contact with honest work, which would be a benefit to all concerned.

The rise in the cost of living and excessive profits in food and other necessities is pointed out as a potent cause of industrial unrest. It is true that many recent strikes have been, in essence, revolts against high prices. The ruinous wastes and excessive costs of the present system of food distribution the primary cause of the high prices, may be eliminated everywhere as

they have been in many places, by organized communities of producers and consumers, dealing directly through the postal service, the greatest distributing system in the world.

Inequality in readjustment of wage schedules under new conditions and excessive hours of work, are mentioned in the report. Bridgeport, Connecticut, met and solved these maladjustments by the simple process of orderly discussion and intelligent decision in the public school buildings of the city. The same success may be attained through the same methods in any American community.

The Industrial Conference report declares that the belief on the part of the workers that free speech is restricted is one of the outstanding causes of industrial strife.

It is true that in many parts of the country, official action has been taken to prevent the gathering of workers in public meeting places. The authority claimed for such action is that contained in laws which place the responsibility of preserving public peace and order upon mayors, sheriffs and other officials. It is always maintained, in such cases, that assemblies of workers, during the stress of labor unrest, have a tendency to disturb the peace by inciting men to violence.

## STRIKING AT THE RIGHTS OF FREE SPEECH.

The results of official determination to prohibit absolutely such meetings, are always bitterness and added hostility on the part of the workers. In July, 1920, the steel workers of Western Pennsylvania, in convention assembled, unanimously adopted resolutions which bitterly denounced the mayors of Duquesne, McKeesport and other cities for preventing their meetings, and declared that their action was an "outrage upon democratic institutions and the rights of freemen, under the Constitution, and a dastardly, despotic, usurpation of civil power worthy only of a Kaiser or a Czar of the old regime in Russia."

In these resolutions was the expression of most bitter feeling, based on the belief that the constitutional rights of every American were grossly violated. The action of the mayors in arresting and fining speakers and spectators at these meetings, was appealed to the courts of Allegheny county. The judge upheld the arrest and punishment of the speakers and organizers and ruled that since the law under which the arrests were made gave the mayor authority to prohibit parades, assemblies or meetings, which would be detrimental to the public interest, he was justified in using his own judgment as to the possible injury to the public.

If this decision squares with American principles, it must inevitably follow that it was solely because it was a group or section of the public, which desired to assemble, that justified officials in prohibiting such meeting as detrimental to the public interest. Certainly, if the entire public gathered in assembly for its own good, it cannot be held that it would act in a manner injurious to itself.

The constitutional rights of free speech and free assembly apply to the people as a whole. It is the rights of individuals, not of groups or classes, that are guaranteed. Still, the fact remains that there must be found a place and a method for free and frank discussion of all labor problems by those whose livelihood is involved.

Such a place is the public school building, owned by all the people, and such a method is the right to meet as a group, through permission of the community organization, which represents the public interest. When the neighborhood meets in common assembly, both employers and employes have a chance to present their plans, formulated in separate meetings, before the bar of public opinion. Neither side has a right to ask more than such an opportunity.

If the neighborhoods of Duquesne had been democratically organized in their own school

buildings, for orderly, all-sided, discussion, no official could have interfered with their meetings. The steel workers are neighbors in the community: so are the managers and superintendents of the steel plants. Meeting together as neighbors, instead of members of hostile groups, there would have come that understanding, without which no final settlement is possible.

Nothing but the closest, severest analysis will finally prevail in an organized and informed community. The community alone has the all-sided interest to assure recognition of the mutual rights of the opposing sides and the equities involved in industrial disputes. Only when all sides are represented and meeting on a common level can all the facts be known. Lincoln said, "The man who will not investigate both sides, is dishonest." It is just as true that the man who cannot investigate both sides is helpless.

When wage earners and the public are uninformed, their judgment is biased by prejudice. But many an incipient strike has been prevented by managers, who had the good sense to open the books and frankly explain the exact facts in the establishment.

Suppressed with a strong hand, industrial facts become industrial dynamite. In Russia the people were kept in ignorance and finally the



pent up resentment of the people burst its bonds and the great empire was hurled into the arms of Bolshevism. Suddenly realizing their wrongs, but not knowing how to remedy them, the people started out to avenge them, with red revolution as the result and again the absolute mastery of the few.

No such spirit can be nursed to life in America if the people know the truth and have in their own hands the power to correct injustice. With such knowledge and with such power, possible with organization of the community, American citizenship may end the universal practice of shifting responsibility for industrial evils and begin constructive action.

Every industrial community in America should know the facts concerning its industries. Everybody may know now what coal miners receive, for the Department of Labor publishes the figures in full detail. No one knows what the coal operators make. When former Secretary of the Treasury William G. McAdoo proposed that the government produce the income tax returns as a basis for determining whether the operators could pay an increased wage to the miners, without adding to the cost of coal, there was instant and indignant outcry from the operators.

So, too, when the miners were endeavoring to



bring before the Anthracite Coal Commission, in August, 1920, the facts concerning mining profits, the head of one of the largest mining corporations made vigorous protest, saying, "The operators are not trying their case before the public. The public is not interested in these matters. This is a matter for the commission, not a matter for spreading in the newspapers."

These leaders in industry are wrong. The public is vitally interested in the profits made. Business in this country must accustom itself to the free air of publicity rather than to continue in the atmosphere of secrecy and stealth. The attempt to hide the methods by which any necessary commodity is supplied to the people is ample reason why those methods should be fully disclosed. We do not need any more visionary schemes and notions in the solution of industrial problems but we do need the facts and figures. The common schools have taught us to add and to subtract and in those same common school buildings we may use that knowledge for the common good. Organized public sentiment, with full knowledge of the facts, can solve the problems of the coal industry and all other industries in America, in fairness to both producers and investors. But the people must know the truth if the truth is to make them free.

## BIG BUSINESS AND PUBLIC INTEREST.

The public must know the profits made by industry and also who receives the dividends. Not a single industrial concern could exist in America, much less make profits, without the great American community. The public owes no greater obligation to the man who invests his capital than the investor owes the public for the opportunity to invest. The people buy the product; they have a right to know what that product costs to make and how much profit is received from the operation.

In the distribution of goods and profits lies the field for constructive action, rather than in production. Former Secretary Lauck of the War Labor Board has testified that 276,000,000 pairs of shoes are ample for the annual needs of America, while we are producing 292,000,000 pairs. He states that 4,000,000 square yards of woolen cloth will meet American needs, while our annual production is 7,600,000 square yards. "Without exception in the production of every article of food there is sufficient, if distributed," says Mr. Lauck, "to more than satisfy all human needs."

Whether this former government expert is right or wrong, the people have the right to know the truth. The day that the people, organized in their community houses, know the truth

of industrial conditions, will be the day of industrial freedom in America. Then the local communities will take from the shoulders of government some of the things it has attempted but failed to do. Responsible participation will teach us all that the successful and just executive is more worthy than the shiftless demagogue and that if the man at the lathe has his backache, the man at the desk has his headache. It will teach us, too, that men are greater than machines, the things of manhood more valuable than the things of money. It will be the assembly of the people, guaranteed by the Constitution, the antidote to the repression which is the seed of revolution.

The Industrial Conference in its report states that the intermittency of employment and fear of unemployment are direct causes of industrial strife. It phrases it in this way:

“The human side of the problem is even more important than the economic aspects. The fear of unemployment is the permanent, pervading background for a large number of our population. The fact of unemployment is a breeder of discontent, resentment and bitterness.”

It is true that there are few greater terrors to the worker than being out of work. He fears it worse than hell itself. It spells privation and poverty for himself and his family. It strikes

at his very life. Some method must be found for coping with this evil if we are ever to have peace in industry.

Unemployment is primarily a local problem. The knowledge of the men who want work and the men who want workers is common in the local community. There should be an employment clearing house, under national control, with coöperative relations between the federal and state governments, so that a labor surplus in any section can be shifted to meet a labor shortage anywhere else. However, the attempt to open expensive agencies in a vast number of localities, to meet the unemployment problem is an inexcusable waste of money.

The community secretary is the logical local employment agent. A worker, by going to the school house in his own neighborhood would be immediately connected with the whole labor market of city, state and nation. Such a plan would do away with the tramping of city streets, in a vain search for a job, the expenditure of money for car fares or as fees to private agencies.

Under a system of organized communities, every community would be a local employment agency, the point of contact for a nation-wide clearing house. With very little expense, it would touch every worker and employer in the

land and finally solve the problem of getting the manless job and the jobless man together.

Hand in hand with this program would go the vocational classes in the community center, where young men and young women could be taught those occupations for which there is need. Individual aptitude might be given thorough training and then by means of the employment center facilities, connected with appropriate opportunities.

One of the master engineers of America said:

“The American, as an individual, is the most efficient man in the world, but other nations have beaten us in teamwork and, unless we learn it in the next generation, we will be hopelessly beaten in the world of industry.”

There is need for teamwork in stopping one of the most woeful wastes in industry, the loss of working days, with all the terrors that follow in its train. That teamwork can be found in the coöperation of Americans in their communities, with every worker in touch with his home headquarters, which in turn is linked up with the state and national labor exchanges.

Every cause of industrial unrest specified by the Industrial Conference can be boiled down to one—cut-throat competition. The remedy is found in its opposite—neighborly coöperation.

Once the common interest is discovered



through common counsel, it will be seen that the cost of these evils in our industrial system, comes back at last to the community. There is not an idea of industrial welfare which is not linked up with the success of the coöperation of the people in their local communities.

### COÖPERATION AS FOUNDATION OF DEMOCRACY.

Such coöperation is democracy and democracy is not a scheme for the redistribution of wealth. It is a plan of social progress under which that industrial system may be established which is in harmony with the collective conscience of the nation. We have seen that our political system has made government the prey of the organized few. The people have not been organized and with all their strength have been helpless before close knit groups intent upon seizing power for selfish advancement.

Just in proportion to that usurpation of governmental power, the benefits of industrial progress have been monopolized by the few. In 1850 the wealth annually created was distributed one-fourth to labor and three-fourths to capital. In 1910 the division was less than one-fifth to labor and four-fifths to capital. Professor Ferrari, the great historian, declares that the concentration of wealth in America during those sixty years has been greater both in rate



of increase and in relation of increase to the wealth of the country and the population than in any other country in the world's history.

Many beneficiaries and guardians of the system that distributed the annual income of America in such unjust proportions, admit the dangers and cry aloud for a change. But beneficiaries cannot, as a class be expected to force money from their own pockets. The victims as a class, cannot, for their agitation is defined as a class war and discredited from the start.

It can be done by common understanding and common agreement. Thus this basic problem can be decided, safely and sanely, not as an end, but as a means to the end—establishment of that social order which will best serve America. Through organized fellowship of Americans necessary changes in the organization of industry will be made so that all individuals will have a fair chance in life and success will become the reward of merit.

Democracy, which is the people getting together for happiness, will mean the conservation of human resources, and the carnage of peace, which now means more workers killed every year than died in battle in our war with Germany, will be made impossible.

It will mean the higher appraisalment of labor, not because of demands enforced by might, but

through recognition that labor is human flesh and blood and brain and brawn, to be respected for its worth and rewarded for its loyalty, as justice demands.

It will mean the prevention of industrial wars, which is better than their cure. The old time, direct contact between employer and employe is only possible to-day through the medium of the community itself and there the old, fraternal feeling may be rediscovered and renewed to the benefit of all.

It will mean the realization of the importance of conditions of life in the neighborhood. The bad housing and unsanitary, dangerous dwellings where workers are crowded and herded, will be seen as a community liability, to be avoided for the common good.

It will mean that the value of home ownership will be clearly seen. The worker who does not stay long enough on a job, or in a town, to make friends, to get a neighborhood contact, may never come down with the disease of disloyalty and sedition, but he is like the typhoid carrier, he may affect whole groups of other men. Home ownership is a stabilizer of character, which only utter disorganization of the American citizenship would have so long neglected. The community reaps abundant dividends in the form of good will, industry, coöperation and

good citizenship. The unity of France in the Great War was one of the marvels of the age. It was due to the fact that every Frenchman owned his little plot of ground and was truly fighting for hearth and home. More than that, in every village in France, the people gathered regularly in their school buildings to receive reports from the central government. There comradeship divided sorrow when evil news came and it also multiplied joy when good tidings were received.

Here in America we may secure that unity in the same fashion. Out of the fraternity of community association will come assurance that the community be composed, not of tenants, but of home owners. Through the postal savings system, broadened to meet the needs, the savings of the community may be used to assist honest and energetic workers to secure the homes they long for, but for which their financial resources are inadequate.

I am not describing any automatic device for securing all the blessings of industrial justice and peace for ourselves and our posterity. It is rather the plan which requires from each one of us the largest amount of faithful service. Democracy rests, not upon the attitude of receiving gifts, not upon an irresponsible sense

of liberty to do as one pleases, but upon unceasing activity in behalf of the common good.

Still, no vocation can be more sacred and no reward more satisfying than that of partnership in a community of friendly men and women, using the power of a citizen, for the building of a greater, better, more just America. Few citizens will shirk that responsibility and fail to enjoy that privilege, once the opportunity is given. Employers will catch the spirit of brotherhood in the challenge of the common welfare, just as many of them did in time of war. When the Titanic went down, the Strausses and the Vanderbilts stepped aside to allow the poor immigrant mothers and children to pass down to the boats in safety. Dealing with that actual, present life stream as it flows through the hearts of human kind, the community spirit will enable a vast majority of those who represent the capital of America, to realize that men can and should live joyfully and fraternally as they progress toward better economic conditions.

Nor will labor fail in the testing. Blind as have been some of its demands, because of its one-sided interest in conflict time, there is at the heart of all the labor unrest in this country, a cry for a chance to develop common feelings, common sympathy and common aspirations. The workers desire their rightful place in the

community and given that, they will help to buttress the foundations of democracy.

The old order went down in death and destruction in the storm of the Great War. It was an order where toil for many honest workers, men and women, secured nothing better than poverty, pain and wretchedness. Millions of gallant Americans have fought for the new world and they will not be betrayed. The world is going to be new again. It is going to be worth something to be born a human being. Some who have been chattels shall be men. Others who have been upholders of autocracy shall be defenders of democracy. In the old days they shouted, "The king is dead, long live the king." In this new day, we say, "The people are dead, dead on a thousand battlefields, dead in the streets of cities, dead, from Chateau Thierry to the Argonne, dead for democracy and the rights of common men. The people are dead: long live the people."

In the common meeting place of the neighbors, assembled to deal with every problem affecting the general welfare, there will be wrought out in America, democracy, sufficient remedy for every industrial problem; where employer and employes may stand on common ground with all the members of the community, in the One Big Union—America.

Part VI

Making Strangers Members of  
America





## VI.

### MAKING STRANGERS MEMBERS OF AMERICA.

Of our one hundred and five million souls, fifteen millions are of foreign birth and twenty millions more are of foreign or mixed parentage. Ten per cent. of our adult population cannot read the laws they are presumed to know and to obey. Out of the first two million men drafted in the Great War to "make the world safe for democracy," an astounding proportion could not read their orders or understand them when they were delivered.

It was in the light of the fires of war that the nation came to see the importance of Americanization. In facing the challenge of autocracy, with all the resources of America pledged to its overthrow, it was suddenly discovered that the United States was almost in the position in which the dual monarchy of Austria-Hungary had found itself long ago, with its unassimilated populations and separate nationalities.

The melting pot had failed to function, if in fact it had ever existed. There had been no real fusing of the various elements in the body

politic into one ingot of united purpose. Instead there were stones and dross, the scum of the melting pot. There were millions of people in America still thinking as Germans, or Italians, or Slavs, or Poles—not as Americans.

In many communities there were colonies of folks from foreign lands, who retained their national language, customs and habits, deliberately excluding everything American while they cherished everything foreign.

In one Pittsburgh suburb, an investigation disclosed that in a single district, comprising only six city blocks, there were 2600 residents, of whom only twelve were American citizens. Many of these persons had been in this country more than twenty years but they frankly stated that they had no intention of becoming American citizens.

In marshalling America's resources for the war, it was found that the message had to be carried in many different languages to these peoples, who were in America, but not of America. The plans of the draft law, liberty loans, food and fuel regulations, Red Cross and other activities had to be conveyed in other tongues than that of America.

It was discovered, also, when Uncle Sam called for soldiers to wage the battles of the republic, that hardly ten per cent. of the immi-

grants arriving here within the previous ten years had declared their intention of becoming American citizens. As aliens, these residents, in many instances, gave no answering response to the call for military service. Several thousand of those who had taken out the first papers of citizenship, cancelled them at once so that they might revert to the status of aliens and thus escape military duty.

These alien slackers were sinister signs to every mother who bade her boy "good-bye" with tears. They set on fire the indignation of every father who bravely told his own lads to fight for the old flag. They were out of danger while American boys faced the hell at Chateau Thierry and fell dying in Argonne Wood.

The menace of such a situation must be evident. The presence of an un-Americanized mass of permanent residents, who deliberately classify themselves as outsiders, poisons the streams of American action; it carries with it the seeds of destruction, whether in war or in peace. And in all human history, no country ever contained so many aliens within its limits as does America to-day.

Still, there were many thousands of aliens who responded gallantly to the call for service during the war. They went to the training camps and there it was found that they could not serve

effectively because they did not understand the language of America. In one cantonment alone, it was found necessary to converse with these men through interpreters in forty different languages. Officers found that great bodies of men, who were physically fit and needed for the fighting lines in Flanders, where world civilization hung in the balance, could not be made into soldiers until they were taught to speak and read the American language.

#### THE UN-AMERICAN ELEMENTS IN AMERICA.

Not only aliens, but many native born, were found to be illiterate, and in need of Americanization. Of the first 1,552,256 men who were examined for military service, 386,196 were unable to read newspapers or to write letters home. The average illiteracy in all camps was 24.9%. In other words, one out of every four physically fit young men called to serve in the battle line, could not read a printed order or write a single word.

These facts, discovered in war time, made this question of Americanization a very live issue, where it had formerly been concealed. We should have known, for the census of 1910 showed 4,611,000 illiterates, twenty years of age and over, in the United States. Besides there were 3,500,000 who could not speak or read the

English language. It must be remembered, too, that the census enumerator asks only the question, "Can you read and write?" and accepts the answer given. Doubtless many illiterates disclaim their inability and this, together with the influx of 6,100,000 immigrants in the decade since 1910, make it more than probable that to-day at least one out of every ten adults in this country cannot read or write the language of America.

That means that there are un-American elements in America to-day amounting to more than the entire population west of the Mississippi in 1910. Ten millions of our people can not read the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, nor any law of Congress, state legislature or city council.

It is impossible to magnify the dangers of this situation. If America is to endure it must be made a nation in fact as well as in name. The complete Americanization of America is not a political issue, nor is it a debatable question. The persons taken into America are like the food taken into the human body; either it is assimilated and becomes bone and flesh and blood and sinew, or it becomes poison. As a matter of imperative necessity, the immigrant population must become a part of the nation. One hundred and five millions of us must stand



together and act together and that means speaking and thinking without a foreign accent.

How shall we meet this colossal task? Again we come back to the fundamental need in America—unity—if we are to make of America a home rather than a polyglot boarding house.

We have been trying to solve this great national problem in piece-meal and by fractions, through group activities and volunteer agencies of a hundred kinds. Spasmodically and hysterically we have sought to Americanize our alien groups with a club, between the long periods during which we have ostracized them with contempt and intolerance.

One and the same result is accomplished by both methods. They make certain the perpetuation in our midst of foreigners, with foreign ideas, foreign sympathies, foreign customs. We cannot and we should not make over again all these varied peoples into one hard and fast mold. America needs the best qualities of these alien peoples to strengthen the original strain and to build a new and virile race, the American. Americanization must be a double process, on one side the convictions of the native born that there is need of partnership in producing the America of to-morrow and on the other side the inducement of the peoples who come to join with us in the task and together produce the

America which is to be. Americanization is not an autocratic activity; it is coöperative. When we force it upon the foreigner from above he rightly repudiates it, but when it is planned with him he welcomes the opportunity and responds gladly.

We must remember that the vast majority of these immigrants to our shores came here as to the land of equal chance. They came here to earn a living, to make a home and to live in the liberty of a democracy, free from the repression they had known.

They did not enter the open gates of America as enemies; they came here to work and live the life of free men and women. They fled here from subjection and injustice, hoping for an opportunity to grow and develop under the flag of America.

Americans, through their neglect, encouraged these newcomers to do the obvious and natural thing, to congregate in their foreign colonies with their fellow-countrymen, to retain their own ways, their language, their customs, their institutions, their habits of life. Americans made them herd in unsanitary tenements with only the pavements for their children's playgrounds. Americans left them to read the foreign language press, because they could not read the language of America.

Our treatment of the alien has been exactly the action which Whitman, the "good gray poet of Democracy," said was the greatest danger to any nation. That is,

"Having certain portions set off from the rest by lines drawn, they not privileged as others, but degraded, humiliated, made of no account, unable to work in, if we may so term it and justify God His Divine aggregate—the people. This, I say, is what democracy is for, and this is what our America means and is doing. If not she means nothing more and is doing nothing more than any other land."

If these newcomers have been disillusioned and have found in their Land of Promise, subjection and injustice and misunderstanding, ours is the fault as much as theirs. If they have huddled into colonies and been untouched by American influence, remaining as outsiders in the midst of the nation, we cannot escape our due responsibility.

The melting pot has not been making Americans because Americans have not been in it. We filled it high with a jumble of antagonistic elements and expected it to function. If Americanism is to be fused into a white-hot steel ingot of noble purpose, Americans must be a part of the molten metal themselves. We ourselves must be Americans and Americanizers.

If right relations are to be established we must look upon these newcomers as "just folks" who long for fellowship. At a meeting in Flint, Michigan, an alien was invited to speak. He said that his only criticism of Americans was that they do not seem to realize that the timidity and reserve and sometimes the bitterness of foreigners are due to the fact that they do not feel encouraged to come into contact with the Americans themselves.

That is the task of the community. The neighborhood spirit alone can create in these strangers the spirit of America, that friendliness which is the soul of democracy. In the coming together of neighbors we can come to know these strangers. The word "hostile" in the original Latin meant "stranger." Because we have not known these people from other lands we have treated them as enemies. Understanding, in this as in every other relation, will bring agreement. It is true that

If I knew you and you knew me,  
And each of us could clearly see,  
And with an inner sight divine  
The meaning of your heart and mine,  
I know that we should differ less,  
And clasp our hands in friendliness;  
Our thoughts would pleasantly agree,  
If I knew you and you knew me.

## THE NEIGHBORHOOD, AND THE WEAVING OF A NATIONAL FABRIC.

The neighborhood is the place for acquaintance and for the weaving of all of us into the fabric of America. The center of the neighborhood, the common building of the people, is the public school house. Wickersham, in his "History of Education" says, "As the people moved west over the mountains, intermingling socially and in business, out of common toils, common privations, common dangers, there necessarily came the common schools."

To-day, those common schools, as assembly places for the people may be made the means of meeting common dangers, lessening common toils and privations. Through them we may Americanize the environment of these stranger-folk and make them indeed members of America.

The task is too big for any group or class; it is just big enough for the American people, working hand in hand. Only when the people are organized in all-inclusive neighborhood association, in their own community house, where every resident comes on equal terms, can there be a real sense of belonging to America, and the unity of common interest. Then the foreigner, from far away lands, may feel the hand grasp of friendship, the grip of the grand fraternity



of Americanism. The new citizen, as a member by right and the alien as an associate member may be shown the value of American citizenship and the joy of fellowship in the land they saw in their dreams. There the immigrant may see the making of America under his eyes and the new citizen may cast his equal vote in the assembly of his neighbors.

There is no other way. The multiplicity of group organizations during the war, created confusion and left a sense of suspicion and distrust in the minds of many who longed to be united with America, but did not understand. Every one with experience in Liberty Loan drives, Red Cross campaigns and other special activities during the war period, knows that many foreigners were bludgeoned into contributing for war loans and funds.

At the same time amazing instances of sacrifice and devotion were of common occurrence. The foreign-born men and women who really understood, poured out their savings with self-denying heroism not excelled by any native born. While there were alien enemies and alien slackers, there were also many of alien stock who stood firm and strong for America and their unfamiliar names were noted in every casualty list that came from Flanders fields, where men fought for the flag of America.



Why was one immigrant loyal and another disloyal? Why are some foreign-born residents friendly to American ideals while others are hostile in spirit toward the country and its institutions?

The differences are explained by the circumstances of their lives after they arrived in America. Those who were shunned during long years of peace as the plague, treated as outcasts and branded as "hunkies" and "dagoes" and "wops" and "Polacks," and were then suddenly assailed from every quarter with demands for help for Uncle Sam, rebelled at the methods of compulsion. When forced to submit, by threats of violence, their enforced participation made them, not good Americans, but infected spots of anti-Americanism.

On the other hand, those who in some measure had merged into the community and had felt the thrill of being part of America, came forward with a will, and in spite of the confusing demands, gave until it hurt. When they were shown even a little consideration and permitted to participate even a little in coöperative action, they answered with gratitude and repaid with loyalty.

Therein lies the answer to the problem. Our efforts to control the foreigner have consisted largely of laws and regulations, of "don'ts."

We have perpetually told the foreigner the many things he cannot do. It is time now to plan the things he may do, to guide his energies and his abilities into channels that will help him and all of us.

In the community assembly, the gathering of the folks from the corners to the center, is found the means of effective action. It furnishes the organization needed, for any kind of constructive action.

America to-day has no registration of aliens and does not know who the foreigners are, where they are or how they live, although such information is the first essential in the problem.

There is only one way to secure this information efficiently and that is in the local community. We do not want any bureaucratic agency to harass these potential Americans, but we do want direct contact with them.

The community secretary, a responsible public servant, acting for all the community, is the logical official to act as registration agent. As a neighborhood agency, this action can be made the means of winning the support and confidence of immigrants, instead of making them the victims of irksome restrictions.

At present the whole task is neglected. With community organization in the school buildings of America, every alien within our limits could

easily be registered and given a card of identification, setting forth essential facts as to nativity, length of residence in this country, employment and references. Such a card, signed by the community secretary and with a provision for checking in any new community into which the immigrant might move, would put an end to the present lack of knowledge. Reports to proper governmental agencies by the communities' secretaries would give all the information needed for legislation and welfare work and at the same time would avoid repressive methods of bureaucratic control.

Neither the Federal government nor the state governments can handle this vitally important work as well as the local communities. It is in fact a return to the census program of the United States from 1790 to 1880. During that period, the census enumerators in the local communities were required to post the information secured in a public place and to explain personally to the people the meaning of the figures in the statistics of the community. Since 1880, there has been a reversal of this sensible policy, and the local census-takers have been forbidden to make public the figures and facts gathered in their work.

Surely, it is time to return to the older plan, at least as far as the question of aliens and

illiterates are concerned, so that the community may know the exact situation and take means to meet the needs shown. This can be done best by making the community secretary the agent of the people in compiling records and in placing them before the citizenship in regular assembly.

#### DEMOCRACY AND ILLITERACY INIMICAL FORCES.

With this community census at hand, the task of making every resident the possessor of the ability to speak and read and write in the language of America, is ready for accomplishment. No man can develop an American soul, or a real regard for American institutions, unless he knows the language of Washington and Lincoln, Jefferson and Webster, Jackson and Roosevelt. Democracy and illiteracy are hostile and irreconcilable forces. The man who cannot read or write is incapable of participating wisely in self-government, and every illiterate man or woman is a menace to American institutions.

An uninformed democracy is not a democracy. An illiterate American is a contradiction in terms, such as free slavery. There must be but one language for the builders of America, else our efforts will fail as did those of the old time king, whose tower went uncompleted.

The task of teaching every illiterate and non-

English speaking adult to read and write in the language of America becomes vastly simplified when there is a community body, using the great educational plant of the nation. When the whole body of the neighborhood touches elbows on the upward march the ascent can be made surely and safely. In the school house, the citadel of democracy, may be wrought out the education of all of us, because there we may go to school to each other.

In the community centers in Washington, D. C. aliens have been taught to read and write in a six weeks' course. Evening after evening, in the public school rooms, under kindly guard of the entire community, strains of strange blood fought for expression. They were unused to mental effort, and generally wearied in body, but they persevered in a spirit which was truly heroic.

I have seen men and women from fourteen different countries of Europe, sitting together in community center classes, and working with undaunted determination to conquer the difficulties of the language of their adopted home.

Their self-respect increased because they knew that they had had a part in the organization of the work and that their neighbors expected them to make good. They were not being manipulated by a superior group of native-born,



which had enforced these classes upon them. Instead, it was a coöperative community activity, planned together for the benefit of all.

Little wonder that one of the teachers in such a community center Americanization school said:

“The men who came to my classes were honest, courageous workers. The women I came to admire for their invincible desire to learn. As I saw them toil at the tasks our children perform in school, and do it patiently and yet eagerly; when I saw them growing in mental stature and their heartfelt appreciation of every helping hand extended to them by their neighbors, I felt a sure confidence in the future of America.”

The seemingly tremendous task of teaching ten million adults to speak, read and write in the language of America, resolves itself into a simple proposition when it is considered on the community basis. If they were equally distributed, it would mean but fifty persons for each school district in America. Of course the problem is largely confined to certain sections, but there is no community in which it can not be met, easily and effectively, if undertaken by all the neighborhood.

Mrs. Cora Wilson Stewart, Superintendent of Schools in Rowan county, Kentucky, has pio-



neered the way in methods and has proved that it is not so difficult a task to teach grown-ups to read and write as has generally been supposed. Mrs. Stewart was impressed with the need for action in her own county in 1911 and decided to open night schools for adults, on moonlight nights, in the public school houses.

The teachers volunteered their services and the plan was explained in all the homes of the countryside. On the first evening, 1,200 men and women from 18 to 86 years of age, were enrolled. They came trooping over the hills and out of the hollows to receive their first lessons in reading and writing. Mrs. Stewart says that they "had all the excuses and all the barriers which any people might offer,—high hills, bridgeless streams, rugged roads, weariness from the day's hard toil, the shame of beginning study late in life, and all the others: but they were not seeking excuses, they were sincerely and earnestly seeking knowledge. Their interest, their zeal and their enthusiasm, were wonderful to witness; it was truly an inspiring sight to see these aged pupils bending over the desks which their children and grandchildren occupied during the day. Their delight in learning and their pride in achievement exceeded any joy that I have ever witnessed."

Out of this splendid work has come a county

without illiterates, where formerly one out of every three adult residents was unable to read or write. Six weeks attendance at these moonlight schools enabled adult pupils to pass over the dark line of illiteracy into the class of those able to read and write. One man, aged 50, wrote a legible letter after seven nights attendance. One woman, aged 70, wrote a legible letter after eight nights study and a large number secured the Bible which Mrs. Stewart had offered to each one who would learn to write a letter during the first two weeks of the term.

We have invested two billion dollars in school buildings and hundreds of millions in post offices, libraries and other public buildings. The illiterates and non-English speaking residents have a share in that expenditure, but they are not aware of it. When they become members of the community, able to read and write its language, their share in the vast national facilities provided for all, is validated. Now, they are disinherited, and the instruments of progress and the institutions to promote democracy are as inaccessible to them as though they dwelt in Mars. We must certify their titles by making them literate members of the community.

Then they widen the market for the advertised products of the land. They become customers for merchandise of which they knew

nothing. They read newspapers and all the products of the printing trade. They become a new asset to America, both through their new tastes and their new purchasing power. If illiteracy reduces purchasing power by only fifty cents a day, the loss of \$825,000,000 every year may be prevented by removing this handicap, Mrs. Stewart has proved that this barrier to development and progress may be broken down, when undertaken in proper spirit, at a cost of less than one dollar per person.

The advantages are beyond the power of expression in terms of dollars and cents. What value is there in pure food and drug laws to men and women who cannot read the labels? Of what use are costly safety first campaigns to those who cannot read the danger signals?

The director of the U. S. Bureau of Mines, in a recent official report, states that the non-English speaking workers in the coal regions are twice as liable to death and injury as those speaking English. This applies as well in the other industries where immigrant labor is used in large numbers.

In the steel and iron industry 58% of the workers are foreign born. In the meat packing industry, 61% of all the workers came to this country from other lands. The official figures show that 62% of the workers in the bituminous

coal industry are foreign born, while 62% in the woolen mills, 69% in the cotton factories, 72 % in the clothing trades, 59% in the furniture factories, 67% in oil refining, and 85% in sugar factories are foreign-born workers.

We have placed the heart of American essential industries in the hands of men born in other lands. For our sake, as well as for theirs we must make them capable of measuring the values of American liberty and American institutions and that is possible only through neighborly sympathy and understanding in the communities in which they live. We must make friends out of strangers and potential enemies.

In Camp Meade, while the young soldiers of the republic were being trained, I saw many times the instructors teaching foreign-born lads the military code of commands. When the exercise reached the point of practicing for sentry duty the teacher would call out, "Halt! Who goes there?" In a chorused cry from a dozen lads of different nationalities would come the answer, "Friend."

THE COMMON GOOD DEMANDS THE PASS-WORD  
"FRIENDS."

If America will get together for the common good; making community organizations which shall include those who have come here with the

gleam of hope in their hearts, when she challenges the purpose of her foreign-born folks, "Who goes there?" the answer will come in one tongue and with one heart, "Friends."

We have crushed Prussianism over there. Now we must direct our awakened energies and aroused national spirit to the assimilation of all foreign elements into an enlightened American citizenship. The millions of Americans, who in the stress of war volunteered their services to the government and acted through mushroom organizations, can complete their work by concentrating their energies on the one permanent organization that includes them all—that of the whole community in the community home.

Through such organization we may make sure that every mentally competent adult in all America will be able to read and write and speak the language of America, but we will also be assured of a vastly more important thing, the Americanization of the environment in which these immigrants live.

Americanization is not complete when the immigrant makes the English language his medium of speech and the illiterate is able to read and write the language of his country. Even the adoption of our manners and customs is but a small part of the process. It is folly to educate men and women and then force them



back into the morass of exclusion, there to become agents of disruption and anti-Americanism. Education may make only a more powerful scoundrel and a more dangerous traitor.

Americanization means that the immigrant and the illiterate must be brought into harmony with our ideals and purposes and that also they must coöperate with us for their accomplishment. They must be given the inspiration of being partners in America, through conference and counsel with their neighbors.

It is a wonderful sight to see, as I have seen, gathered into the common meeting place of the neighborhood, the public school, men and women from Montenegro, Croatia, Italy, Serbia, Russia, Poland, Greece, Armenia, and a dozen more, joining hands with each other across all age-old lines of enmity and with native-born Americans, in one all-inclusive association.

In such an assembly, a collective conscience is created through the freely expressed convictions of all. That conscience has power to save America from all the foes within or without her gates.

It must come as a result of mutual counsel and there must be an opportunity for self-expression on the part of these newcomers for that is



the only way to assure their growth and development.

There have been many Americans in these latter days who have turned their backs on the time-tried principles of America and have advocated the enactment of repressive legislation as to aliens and the suppression of free speech and assembly. Their argument that because a man comes from a foreign land, he must think it right to overthrow government and because he thinks it right, he will attempt it by dagger and dynamite, and then found on such conclusion a law for punishing him as though he had done it, is black wickedness and asinine folly.

Some have been sincere in that course, in their fear of these aliens and in their decision that iron handed repression is necessary to save the republic from red revolution. Talking of American ideals they have become defenders of the most un-American tyranny.

Their legislative measures are well termed "sedition" bills for, if enacted into law, they would be the cause of more anarchy and sedition than all the reds in the history of America. No intelligent citizen sympathizes for a moment with attempts to use violence to accomplish any purpose in America, but every intelligent citizen should recognize the fact that it is only when

ideas are imprisoned that they are apt to become high explosives.

You cannot make good Americans out of the peoples who come to our shores by placing manacles on their minds and padlocks on their lips. You can only make good Americans out of them by treating them as human beings, showing sympathy with their struggle to advance and by giving them a place in the membership of the nation.

#### DISCONTENT AND PROGRESS.

Discontent is wholesome and natural in a democracy. Every forward step in America's history has been made by the unsatisfied and the progress in future will be made possible by those who refuse to accept present conditions complacently. The Master Christian Himself said, "I come, not to bring peace, but a sword." The Prince of Peace did not mean the sword of bloody war, but the sword of new ideas, with their certain disputes and debates, discussions and dissensions. Through these we see the path of progress, the way that leads upward to the light.

True freedom ends where license begins and liberty does not mean the right to attempt by violence the overthrow of the American institutions which guard and insure liberty. We will

prevent violence and lawlessness best, however, by clearing away alien misunderstanding of America in the sunlight of free discussion.

The real fear from sedition in America comes from those who would substitute despotism for democracy, who would stifle honest discussion of the problems before America.

To attempt to put padlocks on the lips or manacles on the minds of men—that is sedition.

To forge chains and build dungeons for honest thinkers—that is sedition.

To prevent open discussion of vital problems and force criticism from the street corner to the cellar—that is sedition.

To make new crimes of the expression of opinion, crimes which every lover of liberty must commit—that is sedition.

To bring contempt upon the government by saying that it will perish if the sunlight is turned upon it—that is sedition.

To use brute force against the arguments of those who are trying honestly to better conditions—that is sedition.

To take all rights from the minority save the right of armed revolution—that is sedition.

To attempt to put a striped suit on an argument and a fact in prison—that is sedition.

To set loose a swarm of heresy-hunters and

blasphemy-seekers on the trail of free men—that is sedition.

To take justice, liberty, equality, out of the meaning of Americanism and make the words only poor, withered meaningless sounds—that is sedition.

America will not decide to deal with possible danger through the use of such un-American measures. Those radical leaders, whose gospel is violence and who talk of armed revolt, are only dangerous through their influence upon ignorant, illiterate, foreign-born folks, who have never had an opportunity to learn that America is the answer to the despotism they experienced in their lands across the seas. Once these victims of misunderstanding have been made to feel the sense of really belonging to America, the power of these leaders with miasmatic breath, who preach brotherhood and bring hatred, will disappear.

In any case, the attempt to repress honest discussion in America is sheerest folly. As Edmund Vance Cook puts it:

“Truth speaks no favor for her blade  
 Upon the field with error.  
 Nor are her converts ever made  
 By force of threats and terror.  
 You cannot salt the eagle’s tail  
 Nor limit thought’s dominion.  
 You cannot put ideas in jail  
 You can’t deport opinion.”

It is not a just policy for the government to punish these strangers in America, without giving them an opportunity to acquire a knowledge of the laws and their relative duties in America. That knowledge can be secured in the community and there those individuals who misunderstand the whole structure of America may be taught to know the meaning of our great adventure in democracy.

Judge Martin I. Wade, Federal Judge for the southern district of Iowa, who has had wide experience in dealing with men who have defied the government, has suggested that "some man or body of men must start a movement, township by township, ward by ward, to ascertain the individuals who are students of un-American doctrines, anarchy, Bolshevism and treason." He states that "there must be sent into the homes of such people, every week, wholesome literature, answering every falsehood presented in the treasonable literature they are now consuming. This American literature must be continuous and it must hold out the hand of fellowship and brotherhood. It must light the fire of hope in the heart. It must bring these souls now wandering in the darkness the great truth that this is now and always has been and always will be the land of opportunity for the humble as for the exalted. We must give to



these people the whole truth and the truth shall make them free.”

Every word that this experienced jurist says is true. But he suggests a mailing list of all students of rebel philosophies, secured by one man in each precinct and handled through a great central organization, the expenses to be met by private contributions.

No such plan of handing down patriotic inspiration from above will ever accomplish the desired result. The foreign-born are quick to sense and resent such high-minded condescension. Every good American citizen must be an example in his own community, in the neighborhood assemblies, where neighbors come together to plan the common welfare. How much better than a mailing list is the hand-to-hand contact of friendly associates. How much better than literature is the free play of expression where neighbors sit together and upright, patriotic lives speak louder than words? How much better than a great central organization, dictating policies, is the democratic organization of the community itself, meeting its own problems in its own way?

In this community center, where the immigrant's children go to school, is the real capitol of the people, where the immigrant himself may come to know America and the meaning of citi-



zenship. Here should be the place where he formally enters American citizenship.

At the community center celebration of Independence Day, 1919, in the school houses of Washington, the newly-made American citizens were the guests of honor as they passed from associate membership in the community to full-fledged citizen membership. They felt the loyalty of coördination not subordination, of fellows, not followers, as they took the pledge written by Secretary of Interior, Franklin K. Lane:

“I enter into American citizenship with this pledge made before my fellow citizens; that the rights and powers given me by this country shall be used that the people of America shall the more perfectly enjoy the benefits of free institutions and increasingly present to the world the strength and security which come from a big regard for the rights of others.”

#### A CEREMONY OF CITIZENSHIP.

What finer inspiration than to receive citizenship in a rolled parchment, on a Fourth of July, in the presence of neighbors and friends? Such an event in every community on the day of America, would help to transform “hyphens” into Americans, potential Bolsheviks into 100%

Americans, to make sure that the red flag shall never be substituted for the Stars and Stripes.

What a difference between occasions like this and the scenes which I have witnessed, where citizens were made at the rate of one a minute, and then shoved out recklessly, without the slightest attempt being made to give the new Americans the sense of membership.

These aliens came with their only relation to government being manifested through the ward heeler and petty boss of their own nationality. They knew nothing of democracy, as it flows through the counsel of neighbors getting together for the common welfare.

The ward heelers answered the questions of the judge. "You know this man?" "Yes." "How long?" "Three months." "Attached to the principles of this government?" "He is." "Raise your right hand and swear allegiance to the government of the United States." "Next."

Is it any wonder that these new Americans fail to understand America, and appreciate the priceless boon of its citizenship? The majesty of the court is not what is needed by these timid inquiring souls to make them love America. It is the fellowship of folks, their neighbors at home, in the school house which their children attend as the expression of America's kindly heart.

We must make these strangers in a strange land feel at home as they share "our house" by giving them a chance to work with us, in a nation which is still growing, still expanding. It is in making the ever-new America, which is always ahead, that real Americanization is possible. Then when we ask the newcomer:

"Tell me true,  
Are you Pole or Russian Jew,  
English, Scotch, Italian, Russian,  
Belgian, Spanish, Swiss, Moravian,  
Dutch, or Greek, or Scandinavian?"

The answer comes back from a patriotic heart:

"What I was is naught to me,  
In this land of liberty.  
In my soul as man to man  
I am just American."

The community center becomes the natural place where all the public welfare projects of America are coördinated and where immigrant as well as native born has equal right to every benefit.

Many times I have seen little children coming to private homes in rural districts, to be treated for minor defects by physicians sent out by the Red Cross. The work was splendidly done, but just over the hills were little children of aliens, who were in sore need of such attention but who

knew nothing of the coming of the medical helpers. Even if they had known they would have hesitated to come to a private residence for such a purpose.

Some of these forgotten little ones had defective eyesight, decayed teeth, and other ailments, which the slightest attention would remedy, but which, if neglected, meant handicaps for life. The United States Public Health Service maintains an expensive service, also, which would operate many times better if it had organized contact with organized communities in the public schools.

It is a truism to say that the slums and foreign districts in our cities are breeding grounds for many diseases. These districts perpetually threaten the health of all the rest of the community, while they increase heavily the cost of maintaining hospitals and other institutions to deal with their results. No man or woman who lives in the community can safely say that it matters nothing what conditions exist in the poorer sections. Once started the contagious disease spreads to mansion as well as hovel.

The slum is among the greatest extravagances of American life. Tuberculosis, typhoid fever and other preventable diseases cost this nation a billion and a half dollars every year. They can be prevented whenever Americans realize

fully that the nation is a neighborhood, and makes provision for the organization, without which nothing can be accomplished.

Of course, the organized community is the point of beginning for many governmental projects which have not measured up to expectations or to needs. Here is the place for the employment agency, where the jobless man and the manless job may be brought together. Here is the place for the postal station, linking up the federal government with the local community, and the community with every other community in the wide world. Here is the place where agricultural and industrial experts may bring their messages of instruction to the whole people, native born and foreign born alike.

There should be a real census of America, not every ten years but every year and all the year. In every community headquarters there should be records of the residents, with careful attention paid to those vital social and industrial statistics, without which there can be no constructive approach to the solution of many problems. The accumulation of this data and making it understood in the community, would be of great value in Americanization, for it would enable the alien and stranger to see America in the making and to have a part in the task.

Under the community association would be



conducted the playgrounds, where the foreign born boy and girl may learn more of American ideals than anywhere else. The rules of fair play and voluntary choice of leaders and games, are methods of practice in democracy, while the supervision of the community inspires the sense of obligation to all the people of the neighborhood.

There are opportunities for community pageants, where the development of civilization older than our own may be shown and appreciated. Some one has well said "By applying the art of the theater to social drama, we shall help to convert the mentality of competition into the mentality of coöperation." And that after all is the foundation ideal of America, the world's greatest adventure in that democracy, which is a whole people getting together for happiness. There is no better method of inculcating Americanism into the foreigner's mind than by having his help in celebrating patriotic festivals, by weaving into them the folk songs and dances which he has learned from long lines of ancestors on the other side of the globe.

Community music will also bring all together in a common pleasure. Many of the European nations use music as a nationalizing force and when their people come here and do not find an opportunity for their wonted habits, they natur-



ally gather into exclusive societies, which perpetuate their language and customs and build barriers between them and the body of American citizenship. Many foreigners have said that their chief reason for homesickness in America was the lack of the musical facilities which they had in the home lands.

The community assembly, with its hand of friendship extended, will rally these lovers of music to chorus singing in the American language and will hasten their education for citizenship with an inspiration which could be kindled in no other method. It will mean unity of effort, response to leadership and enthusiasm in a common pleasure.

By neighborly counsel, the immigrants may be protected from the harpies that prey upon them and rob them at every opportunity. They invested their hard-earned savings in Liberty Bonds and then, in many instances, were fleeced by fraudulent promoters, who were generally American citizens. Naturally, such frauds make them resentful and sullen. Neighborhood associations, by organized effort, can protect these easily-duped strangers and win their gratitude by showing them our best side, that which is most admirable in us, instead of our marauding worst.

If we have made an opportunity for every im-

migrant to become a member of America, then we have a right to demand that he take a formal pledge of citizenship. Then we may say that if America is not good enough to hold his loyalty and allegiance, the sooner he leaves to make his living in the land which has his first affection and loyalty, the better for him and all the rest of us.

We cannot tolerate the presence of a vast body of people who are not citizens. For the sake of America and her future, there must be a real stake in America, as the possession of those who make it their permanent home.

That means a square deal for those whose friendship and help we need, and who need ours. They must be given a chance to become fellow workers in the making of America. There is no danger, if that is done, that the folks who came here from the peasant villages of Europe, will join any enemies of America.

They are like orphan children, driven out by abusive relations. If America takes them as members of her great family, gives them the opportunities to grow and develop in the same freedom possessed by her own children, think you that they will treacherously stab their benefactor in the back in the time of testing? Such fiendish ingratitude and unpardonable treason is not in the heart of one immigrant out of a

hundred thousand. Given only the sense of being partners in America, a square deal and no favors, they will repay, as loyal and grateful comrades, with the service and sacrifice, which is also a part of true Americanism.

The foreign born have helped to make our history in the past. From every land on the globe we have drawn materials which will make us stronger for the future. They have something to give us just as we have something to give them. America is not perfect nor standing still and we should welcome every worthy contribution, every bit of old world culture, every song and story out of the experience of ancient peoples. We do not want to develop only the selfish, greedy side of the immigrant, but we do want a real mingling of peoples and a real clash of cultures. We want the wisdom of other lands, the wisdom which is "better than the merchandise of silver and the gain thereof than fine gold," to make it our own. We want all that is profitable for human kind made bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh.

Such aims can only be accomplished through organized communities, meeting in the head-and heart quarters of the neighborhood—the public school.

## THE BROTHERHOOD OF AMERICAN CITIZENSHIP.

Let us have this one acknowledged meeting place, an all-inclusive organization, where people meet as neighbors, Catholic, Protestant, Jew and Gentile; where all our numberless nationalities may join hands in a community of devotion to American ideals and American citizenship.

Let us show through this fellowship that American citizenship is a priceless privilege, carrying with it prestige and power; that it means intelligence and freedom, development of the intellect and cultivation of the heart; that it is a shield of protection for every possessor, guaranteeing all the rights of free men; that it is a heritage from the humble boy in the Kentucky cabin who became the great Emancipator; from the boy on the towpath, who came to the White House; from the weakling lad whose inner strength made him the most vigorous and dynamic figure of our day; from all the long line of great Americans who conquered all difficulties and greatly served America.

Let us show through this fellowship that the selfish interests of persons, classes, creeds, races and parties must be subordinated to the welfare of the commonwealth; that the sovereign right of the ballot is in the hands of men and women who have a fair chance to discuss with their fel-

low citizens, every problem that presses for solution; that freedom must be safeguarded by law and that the end of freedom is fair play for all; that the majority of citizens may have exactly the same kind of government they prescribe at the ballot box; and that the man who establishes a home in America is the founder of a royal house.

Let us show through this fellowship that those who sleep at Valley Forge and Gettysburg and in Flanders Fields did not die in vain, when they paid the last full measure of devotion for Old Glory and the citizenship it guards and protects.

With the optimism that recognizes the evils in present conditions but courageously plans, with the help of fellow citizens, to meet and overcome them, we may take the spirits of Babel, the stranger faces, the blood of many races, and make them into America, keeping the starry banner flying over a land of Americans, a land of equal opportunities and equal justice.

In the gleam of Old Glory flying above the public school houses of America, by day, when the children of native born and foreign born master their lessons together; by night when adults native born and foreign born go to school to each other in solving common problems by mutual discussion and decision, we may



see the vision of a people embodying the vibrant spirit of youth, their eyes turned toward the rising dawn of brotherhood, accomplishing enduring works for the common weal, through a sovereignty wrought out of enlightened comradeship and the united will to establish democracy in America.

Oh beautiful for patriot's dream  
 That sees beyond the years,  
 Thine alabaster cities gleam,  
 Undimmed by human tears.  
 America, America,  
 God send His grace on thee  
 And crown thy good, with brotherhod,  
 From sea to shining sea.

THE END.



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